THE PANOPLIST;

OR,

THE CHRISTIAN'S ARMORY.

No. 24.] MAY, 1807. [No. 12. Vol. II.

Biography.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE REV. WILLIAM COOPER,

A PASTOR OF THE CHURCH IN BRATTLE STREET, BOSTON.

The early years of Mr. Cooper were distinguished by presages of that eminence, which in future life he actually attained. A vigorous mind, intense application, and an ardent thirst for knowledge marked his childhood. Blest with a religious education, he exhibited, even at this period, hopeful evidences of piety; evidences which brightened with his years, till all who knew him were convinced that the grace of God had taken possession of his heart. At his father's death, his lovely and afflicted mother found in him a *son of consolation* indeed. His tender and sympathetic attentions, in this trying scene, were mingled with a *seriousness*, which gave them a double value.

His progress in the branches of knowledge usually taught at school, was rapid. But the *Bible* was his chosen companion; and with the greatest assiduity, he stored his mind with its sacred truths. He had early set his heart on being a *minister of Jesus Christ*; and from this choice he never swerved.

At seven years old, while hearing a sermon of Mr. Colman, with whom he afterward was colleague, he was so attracted by the eloquence of his manner, that he went home with a determination to read like him; a circumstance, which drew from that venerable man (who survived him, and preached on his death) the following affectionate and humble remark. "I ought to thank God, (says he) if I have served any way to form him for his since eminent pulpit services, and in particular, his method of preaching Christ and Scripture. *So a torch may be lit at a farthing candle.*"

Mr. Cooper's youth, though passed in the midst of temptation, was exemplarily pure. He was grave, but not gloomy, nor austere; discreet, but not precise; and cheerful, with innocence. Study was his recreation. He accurately discriminated, and ardently cultivated those branches of science which were most useful and important. Every literary pursuit was sanctified by prayer, and every human acqui-

sition rendered subservient to the knowledge of God and religion.

Though he entered the desk young, it was not without the advice of the most eminent ministers in Boston. Their expectations were high; but they were exceeded. In the opinion of the ablest judges, his first exhibitions stamped him with the character of an accomplished and eminent preacher.

The Church in Brattle street, of which he was a member, soon chose him, with great unanimity, as co-pastor with the Reverend Mr. Colman, afterward D. D. The ordination, which, at Mr. Cooper's request, was deferred for a year, was solemnized May 23, 1716. From this period to that of his death, his ministerial gifts, graces and usefulness seemed regularly and uninterruptedly to increase, and the more he was known, the more he was esteemed, loved, and honoured, as one who eminently fulfilled the ministry which he had received from the Lord Jesus.

As a preacher he was *mighty in the Scriptures*, and *contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints*. He was an able and zealous advocate for the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel. Christ, the *alpha* and *omega* of the Bible, was ever the prominent object in his discourses. On the *doctrines of grace*, he insisted much; considering them as not only constituting the sole foundation of a sinner's hope, but as exhibiting the capital aids and incentives to holiness of heart and life. Hence his preaching was *practical*, as well as evangelic. It inculcated obedience upon Christian principles, and by Christian arguments.

His sermons were composed with care; easy and natural in method; rich in important truth; plain, but not grovelling in style; solid and argumentative, yet animated with the spirit of devotion. They were calculated at once to enlighten the mind, impress the conscience, and warm the heart. In explaining the profound and sublime truths of the gospel, he had the singular felicity to be intelligible to the ignorant, instructive to the well-informed, and edifying to the serious. In prayer, he remarkably excelled. Always ready, always serious and animated, with a mind stored with scriptural ideas and expressions, and a heart fired with devotion, he seemed to *converse* with his God, and bear along his fellow-worshippers to the very gate of heaven. He had a voice at once powerful and agreeable, an elocution grave and dignified; while a deep impression of the majesty of that BEING whose mercy he implored, and whose messages he delivered, was visible in his countenance and demeanor, and added an indescribable solemnity to all his performances.

In his discharge of pastoral duties, he was exemplarily diligent, faithful and affectionate. His preaching being very acceptable to other congregations beside his own, scarce a Sabbath passed in which he did not preach both parts of the day; in addition to which, he frequently performed at stated and occasional lectures.

Nor were his abundant labours in the gospel without important and happy effect. God was pleas-

ed to grant the desire which was nearest his heart; to make him an instrument of saving good to many, who loved and revered him as their spiritual father. He was an eminent instrument and promoter of the great revival of religion which took place toward the close of his life. With a heart overflowing with joy, he declared, that *since the year* 1740, *more people had sometimes come to him in concern about their souls in one week, than in the preceding twenty-four years of his ministry.* To these applicants, he was a most judicious, affectionate counsellor and guide. Some, indeed, stigmatized those remarkable appearances as nothing better than delusion and enthusiasm. Nor did Mr. Cooper himself fail to bear a decided testimony against the spirit of separation, and other irregularities which mingled themselves with the religious commotions, in some parts of the land. Yet, nobly disregarding human censure and applause, where he thought the honour of God was concerned, he invariably declared his persuasion that a remarkable work of divine grace was going on. The numerous instances which met him, in his own circle, of persons affected, either with pungent and distressing convictions of sin, or with deep humiliation and self-abhorrence, or with ardent love to God and man, or with inexpressible consolation in religion, perfectly satisfied him that the presence and power of the divine REPROVER, SANCTIFIER and COMFORTER was among them.

In the private walks of life, he displayed the combined excellencies of the gentleman and Christian. In conversation, he was equally entertaining and instructive; and while he was courteous and kind to all within his sphere, he was especially valued and endeared in the relations of husband, father, master and friend.

He lived in great affection and harmony with his colleague, serving with him as a son with a father. "If in any particular point," says that great and good man, "I could not act with him, yet he evidently appeared to me to act, as he professed—as of sincerity, in the sight of God, and as his conscience commanded him."

In the sermon occasioned by Mr. Cooper's death, Dr. Colman expresses himself in this remarkably affectionate style: "This I can truly say (as I said in tears over the dear remains, on the day of interment) that had I the like confidence of my own *actual readiness to be offered*, I would much rather, for your sake, and the churches through the land, have chosen to die in his stead, might he have lived to my years, and served on to the glory of God."

Mr. Cooper was truly an honour and blessing to his country. Scarce any minister was more esteemed and loved by his brethren, or by the community at large. In the year 1737, he was chosen by the Corporation, president of Harvard College; but when the vote was presented to the board of Overseers, he declined the honourable trust. Near the period of his death, his reputation for piety and learning was rapidly extending, and several divines of the

first character in England and Scotland sought his correspondence.

His dissolution was sudden and unexpected to his friends, but probably not to himself. He had frequently expressed his expectation of an early death. Immediately on his being seized with an alarming complaint, his church, anxious for his valuable and important life, spent a day in humiliation and prayer. The assembly was numerous, and deeply affected; ardent supplications, mingled with many tears, were offered to Him who is able to save. But the time was at hand when he must be removed to that better world, for which, by his illustrious piety, and unwearied diligence in his Master's work, he was now mature.

The nature of his illness deprived him, in great measure, both of speech and reason. Yet in some lucid intervals, he was enabled to declare that *he rejoiced in God his Saviour;* and likewise to signify, by raising his hand, in reply to questions which were proposed to him, that *he cheerfully resigned his spirit into the hands of Christ*; that *he had the peace which passes understanding, and could leave his dying testimony to the ways of God.*

He departed December 13th, 1743, in the 50th year of his age, tenderly mourned by his bereaved family and congregation; sincerely regretted and highly honoured by the town and the whole community. Z.

SKETCH OF REV. THOMAS WADSWORTH.

Thomas Wadsworth, M. A. Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, was born at Southwark. He was so weak in the first month of his life, that he was given over for dead; but by a wonderful providence was on a sudden recovered. While at Cambridge, he gained great respect by his college exercises. In 1652 he was fixed in the rectory of Newington Butts. In his settlement here, it was remarkable, that the parishioners were divided into two parties, and on the vacancy both went with their petitions to Westminster, neither knowing the other's mind, and he was the person pitched upon by both. Here he not only preached constantly, but zealously taught from house to house. He gave Bibles to the poor, and expended his estate, as well as time, in works of charity among them; and it pleased God to give him abundant success. But in 1660 he resigned the living to Mr. Meggs, who pretended to be the legal rector. Mr. Wadsworth however did not live useless; for beside his lecture on Saturday morning at St. Antholine's, and for some time on Lord's day evenings, and on Monday nights at St. Margaret's, (where he had a great concourse of hearers) he was chosen by the parish of St. Lawrence. He was also a lecturer of St. John Baptist. He was indeed an extraordinary man; of singular ability, judgment, and piety; wholly devoted to God; and did not care for conversing with the rich, unless they could be prevailed on to be free in acts of charity. He would reprove sin in any person of whatever rank; but with much prudence, and with great candour, which he took pains to promote in others;

for which end he often gave this rule; "If a good sense can be put upon what another says or does, never take it in a bad one." He was always serious, though frequently cheerful, and was remarkable for sanctifying the Sabbath. It was his usual practice, for many years, as soon as he was out of his bed on the Lord's day, with a cheerful heart and voice to sing part of a psalm or hymn, or to repeat the acclamation of the heavenly host; "glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will toward men;" in order to put himself into a spiritual frame for the work of the day. In his family his heart was greatly raised in singing psalms. He used often to say to his wife and other relatives, "Don't you find a sweetness in this day? Certainly it is the sweetest day in all the week." He was mighty in prayer, and often admonished his friends to watch for opportunities to seek God in private. In all his relations he was greatly beloved and singularly useful.

When he was ejected, the lamentations of the people would have melted any compassionate heart. At their desire, he preached privately to one congregation at Newington, and to another at Theobalds, by turns, without taking any salary from either. He afterwards had a fixed congregation at Southwark. His charity to his distressed brethren in the ministry was great. He made collections for them both at Southwark and Theobalds, having a singular faculty for disposing his hearers to give liberally. When in perfect health he was thoughtful of changes, and often prayed that God would prepare him and his for sickness and death. For many years he performed his hard, but pleasing work, under distressing pain from a stone in his reins, which at last brought him to his end. After preaching his last sermon, he endured a week of extreme pain night and day, in which he possessed his soul in singular patience. When his pains were sharpest, he said, "I am in an agony, but not a bloody one; what are all my pains to what Christ underwent for me!" The evening before his death he was asked, how he did; he answered, "I have been under a very sharp rod, but it was what my heavenly Father laid upon me; for he has said, '*as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten.*' This is a paradox to the world; but everlasting arms are under me; and, I bless God, he hath taken all the terror of death away from me." To Mr. Parsons, his fellow labourer, he said, all my self-righteousness I disown; and trust only in Christ, hoping I have a gospel righteousness." When those about him pitied his agonies, he repeated that text, "the heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not with its joy." "You know what my pains are, but you know not what my consolations are. Oh, how sweet will my glory and triumph be after these sharp pains!" When his relations wept about him, he was displeased, saying, "What! are you troubled, that God is calling home his children? If you think I am afraid of death, you mistake; for I have no fear of death upon me." Under his sharpest pains, no other language escaped his

lips, than this; "Father, pity thy child." He died on Lord's day, Oct. 29, 1696, aged only 46.

SKETCH OF REV. THOMAS GOUGE.

THOMAS GOUGE, M. A. of King's College, Oxford, was son of the eminent Dr. William Gouge. After taking his degrees, he left the university and his fellowship, being presented to a living in Surry, where he continued two or three years, and then removed to St. Sepulchre's in London, in 1638, a large and populous parish, in which with solicitude and pains he discharged all the duties of a faithful minister 24 years, i. e. till the act of uniformity in 1662. Beside his constant preaching, he was diligent and charitable in visiting the sick; not only ministering spiritual counsel and comfort to them, but liberally relieving the necessities of the poor. Every morning through the year, he catechised in the church, chiefly the poorer sort, who were generally the most ignorant, and especially the aged, who had most leisure. To encourage them to come for instruction, he once a week distributed money among them; but changed the day, to secure their constant attendance. The poor, who were able to earn their own living, he set to work, buying hemp and flax for them to spin; paying them for their work, and selling it, as he could, among his friends. In this way he rescued many from idleness, poverty and vice.

His piety toward God, the necessary foundation of all other virtues, was great and exemplary, yet still and quiet; much more in substance, than in show. It consisted, not in finding fault with others, but in the due government of his own life and actions; *exercising himself always to have a conscience, void of offence toward God and man;* in which he was such a proficient, that, after long and familiar acquaintance with him, it was not easy to discern any thing in him, that deserved blame. Such was his modesty, that he never appeared, by word or action, to put any value upon himself. In regard to the charities he procured, he would rather impute them to any, who had the least concern in obtaining them, than assume any thing to himself.

When he quitted his living at St. Sepulchre's, upon some dissatisfaction about the terms of conformity, he forbore preaching, saying, "there was no need of him in London, and that he thought he could do as much good in another way, which would give no offence." Afterward however he had licence from some Bishop to preach in Wales, when he took his annual journey thither; where he saw great need of it, and thought he might do it with great advantage among the poor, on account of his charities there. He was clothed with humility, and had in a most eminent degree the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. His conversation was affable and pleasant. A wonderful serenity of mind was visible even in his countenance. Upon all occasions he appeared the same; always cheerful, and always kind; ready to embrace and oblige all men; and, if they did but fear God and work righteousness, he heartily loved them, however distant from

him in judgment about things less necessary, and even in opinions, that he held very dear.

But the virtue, which shone the brightest in him, was his *charity* to the poor. God blessed him with a good estate, and he was liberal beyond most men in doing good with it. This indeed he made the great *business of his life;* to which he applied himself with as much diligence, as other men labour at their trades. He sustained great loss by the fire of London, so that (when his wife died, and he had settled his children) he had but 150*l. per ann.* left; and even then he constantly disposed of 100*l.* in works of charity. He possessed singular sagacity in devising the most effectual ways of doing good, and in disposing of his charity to the greatest extent and best purposes; always, if possible, making it serve some end of piety; *e. g.* instructing poor children in the principles of religion, and furnishing grown persons, who were ignorant, with the Bible, and other good books; strictly obliging those, to whom he gave them, to read them diligently, and inquiring afterward, how they had profited. His occasional relief to the poor was always mingled with good counsel, and as great compassion for their souls, as their bodies; which, in this way, often had the best effects. For the last ten years of his life, he almost wholly applied his charity to Wales, where he thought there was most occasion for it; and he took great pains to engage others in his designs, exciting the rich, in whom he had any interest, to works of charity in general; urging them to devote at least a *tenth* of their estates to this use.

When he was between 60 and 70 years of age, he used to travel into Wales, and disperse considerable sums of money, both his own, and what he collected from other persons, among the poor, labouring, persecuted ministers. But the chief designs of his charity were to have poor children taught to read and write, and carefully instructed in the principles of religion; and to furnish adults the necessary means of religious knowledge. With a view to the *former*, he settled in Wales three or four hundred schools in the chief towns; in many of which women were employed to teach children, and he undertook to pay for some hundreds of children himself. With a view to the *latter*, he procured them Bibles, and other pious and devotional books, in their own language; great numbers of which he got translated, and sent to the chief towns, to be sold at easy rates to those, who were able to buy them, and given to such as were not. In 1675 he procured a new and fair impression of the Welch Bible and liturgy, to the number of 8000; one thousand of which were given away, and the rest sold much below the common price. He used often to say with pleasure, that he had two livings, which he would not exchange for the greatest in England; viz. *Christ's Hospital*, where he used frequently to catechise the poor children; and Wales, whither he used to travel every year, and sometimes twice in a year, to spread knowledge, piety, and charity.

While Mr. Gouge was doing

all this good, he was persecuted even in Wales, and excommunicated, for preaching occasionally, though he had a licence, and went constantly to the parish churches and communicated there. But, for the love of God and men, he endured all difficulties, doing good with patience and pleasure. So that, all things considered, there have not been, since the primitive times of Christianity, many among the sons of men, to whom that glorious character of the Son of God might be better applied, that "he went about doing good." He died suddenly in his sleep, Oct. 29, 1681, aged 77. His funeral sermon was preached by Abp. Tillotson, from which the above account is principally extracted. Mr. Baxter says, "He never heard any one person speak a word to his dishonour, no not the highest prelatists themselves, save only that he conformed not to their impositions."

ORTON.

Religious Communications.

ON CHRISTIAN ZEAL.

FEW subjects in religion have been viewed in lights so diverse and opposite, as that of zeal. Some seem to consider it as constituting the very essence and sum of all goodness; the *foundation* of Christianity, and its superstructure too. Others treat every kind and degree of it as so much fanaticism or hypocrisy. While a third class affect to consider it as a thing *indifferent*—innocent perhaps—but yet a mere *appendage*, or rather *excrescence* of Christianity; superfluous, unimportant and useless. To neither of these opinions does the word of God afford any countenance. It faithfully warns us that there is a zeal which is false and noxious. And it informs us that there is a genuine and holy zeal, not indeed so properly constituting a distinct virtue by itself, but rather pervading the whole spirit and character of a Christian, and producing the most useful and lovely effects. It may not be unimportant then to inquire into the nature, properties and obligations of truly Christian zeal.

Zeal is opposed to torpor and indifference. It may be denominated an ardour and impetuosity of mind; or a lively, vigorous, flowing state and exercise of its affections. From this general definition it appears that zeal is either virtuous or criminal, beneficial or noxious, according to the object and the manner of its exercise. By way of ascertaining, therefore, the nature and qualities of that zeal which may properly be styled Christian, we will consider it as a *personal* duty, and as a duty we owe to the cause of God, and to the best interests of our fellow men.

It has been justly remarked that true zeal, like charity, begins at home. Its prime office is to correct what is wrong in ourselves; to see to it that our own hearts be right, and our lives exemplary. Its most vehement

indignation should be directed against our own sins; its most vigorous efforts, to our own reformation and improvement. Can that man be much concerned for the salvation of others, who is careless of his own? Can he be deeply grieved and pained for others' sins, who is little affected with his own corruptions, follies and vices?

Christian zeal has a place and influence in every other Christian grace and virtue. It imparts a tenderness and ardour to holy love; a strength and activity to faith. It renders reverence and godly fear more awful; and gives wings to the Christian's pious desires. While it infuses a sting into penitential sorrow, it adds vigour and confidence to hope; and sublimates joy in God into transport and triumph.

It has likewise an important place and use in every act of devotion. It will lead us, in prayer, to pour out, not words only, but devout breathings, intense desires, and, as it were, our very souls, to our Father in heaven. In praise, it will fill us with a solemn and delightful sense of his adorable excellencies, and infinitely varied benefits. In confession, it will melt our hearts into ingenuous and unutterable grief. It will cause us to enter the sanctuary *longing for God, as the hart panteth for the water brooks.* It will engage us, while we hear and meditate his word, to *hunger* for the bread of life, and *thirst* for its precious waters.

Further, genuine zeal, if we possess it, will operate in the mortification of our sins and corruptions, and engage us in a course of holy obedience. It will lead us resolutely to *pluck out right eyes*, and *cut off right hands*, if these be the occasions or instruments of transgression. It will inspire and fortify us for the painful, but necessary work of *crucifying the flesh, with its affections and lusts; of mortifying our earthly members; of keeping under our bodies, and bringing them into subjection;* yea, it will arm us with courage and resolution to *pull down strong holds*, and *cast every proud imagination into the dust.* It will not permit us to indulge our ease, as long as we have one base passion unsubdued; one criminal propensity unmortified. Here is one capital trial of the genuineness of our zeal. Are we engaged and anxious to reform, not only a sinful world *without* us, but a world of iniquity *within* us? Does the habitual exemplariness of our temper and conduct declare that our love to holiness, and hatred to sin, are genuine and impartial? Are our lives assiduously filled up with duty to God, and active beneficence to man? Do we not only *walk humbly* with our Maker, but *do justly*, and *love mercy*, to our fellow creatures? Are we *rich in good works?* Do we *abound* in them? Do we so live, as that an important chasm would be realized, and the best interests of society sustain a shock, should our exertions cease? Alas! that is but a spurious zeal which spends itself in complaints of the badness of the times, and the degeneracy of the age, while no substantial exertions are made to increase the sum of virtue and beneficence, and while of course the complainer himself is but a *cumberer of the ground*, a nuisance in society.

In a word, if we have true zeal, we shall be solicitous to find ourselves making daily progress in holiness, and approximating to a thorough meetness for heavenly glory. We shall not be satisfied with any past attainments, supposed or real. We shall anxiously *lay aside every weight*, and *every easily besetting sin, and run with patience, alacrity and perseverance, the race set before us.* The nearer we approach to our heavenly crown, with the greater ardour shall we spring forward to embrace it. What a pattern of this sublime ambition, this sacred zeal, was the venerable Paul, who, in the midst of as great attainments in religion, as perhaps ever fell to the lot of a mortal, expresses himself in this humble language; *Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do: forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God, in Christ Jesus.*

Respecting the zeal thus imperfectly described, it may be remarked that its distinguishing characteristic is *sincerity.* Its proper seat is in the soul; and thence it diffuses itself through the conversation. It is opposed to nothing so immediately, as to that coldness, or lukewarmness of *heart*, in the things of God and religion, which alas! is natural to depraved man. Its subject is, in the view of the omniscient and heart-searching Jehovah, what he *appears* to be, to his fellow creatures. As an evidence of this sincerity, the Christian's zeal will often act itself out principally in *retirement.* He is far from that Jehu-like spirit, which delights in nothing so much as the display of its own goodness, and calls to a surrounding world: *Come, see my zeal for the Lord.* His inward feelings are often much *stronger*, than he is disposed the world should know. He has many a tender, and almost overwhelming sensation, which he can deposit only in the bosom of his God.

As the result of this sincerity, the Christian's zeal will be *uniform.* There is scarce any thing which so strongly marks and distinguishes the real child of God, as a certain *symmetry* of character. The most refined and subtle hypocrite cannot imitate it, and seldom so much as attempts to do so. Such are often full of apparent fervour in those performances in which there is little self-denial, or for which they have a present reward in the applause of their fellow-men. But in the mean time, secret duties, mortifying duties, those which are hard to flesh and blood, are either totally neglected, or very inconstantly and superficially discharged. Far different is the sincere and zealous Christian. What he is in the closet, he is in the world. What he appears in the world, he is in the closet. Wherever he goes, he carries with him a sense of God; and this sense of an ever-present and heart-searching DEITY is more than a thousand witnesses to engage him to all duty, and deter him from all sin. He is conscientious and in earnest in every thing which his Master in heaven has enjoined. He does not suffer the duties of

devotion to set aside those of morality; nor the duties of morality to form a pretence for neglecting those of devotion. He has a sacred and practical respect to *all* the divine commandments. He abstains from all sin. He *cleanses himself from all filthiness, both of flesh and spirit.*

It may be added, that the Christian's zeal is not a transient, but a *durable* thing. Thus too it is strikingly distinguished from those flaming *appearances* of goodness which often dazzle for a time. The religion of hypocrites may be resembled to the same object to which Solomon compares the mirth of fools. It is like *the crackling of thorns under a pot.* It makes much noise and shew; not unfrequently far more than the religion of the real, humble Christian. But it is soon over. And its poor, deluded possessor relapses into carelessness and security; perhaps into flagrant, soul-destroying vices. Ah, how wretched that religion which is thus survived! But the Christian's zeal is an undying flame. It is kindled up by the Spirit of the living God, whose veracity is pledged to *perfect the good work* which his mercy begins. Nor shall all the blasts of temptation, which assail it in this unkindly clime, be suffered to extinguish it. It shall live even here, till it burst out with renovated splendour in heaven; till the happy Christian feel transported with the pure ardour of "the rapt seraph that adores and burns."

The subject shall be resumed and pursued in a future number.

Z.

PRACTICAL REMARKS ON THE DECALOGUE.

(Concluded from page 518.)

When the universe was a vast, unformed mass, involved in disorder and darkness, God said, "Let there be light; let the waters be divided from the waters; let dry land appear; let grass grow for cattle, and herb for the use of man." The command was effectual. A beautiful system arose, fitted for the convenience and happiness of the endless variety of creatures which were produced. The word, so effectual in this instance, is not less effectual in others. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me; thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image; thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; honour thy father and thy mother; thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt not covet." The command has not returned void. We cannot calculate the efficacy which it has had. It has opposed the general progress of irreligion and immorality. It has retained thousands of thousands in the pure worship of the true God. It has mollified and humanized thousands of hearts.

This subject admits not the same proof as other subjects. But let it be a little varied, and the conclusion reverts in all its strength. Suppose that God had not meddled with the affairs of mankind, and that they had been left to do, without restraint, as they thought fit. The consequence no doubt would have been an utter contempt of reli-

gion, and such abandoned and violent practices, that our earth would have looked like the habitation not of men, but of devils. Happy for us, that God has interposed. The present state of the world is bad indeed; but without the divine interposition it had been infinitely worse. His command has hitherto opposed, and does still oppose the superfluity of naughtiness. And the time shall come, when it shall bring into existence the new heavens and the new earth, wherein righteousness will dwell.

The moral law requires a sober, righteous, and godly life; but this law is part of the Old Testament;—that part, in which the morality of the Old Testament is summed up. Here the friends and the enemies of that part of revelation ought to meet in investigating its characteristics in a moral view. A candid investigation must end in its favour. Why then do enemies say, the Old Testament teaches every thing that is bad? Did they ever read the decalogue? Is it thence they derive their sentiments? Surely they read with jaundiced eyes; they judge with perverted minds. The fact is, they keep clear of the decalogue. To bring this into view will not answer their ends.—They find an order in the Old Testament utterly to destroy the inhabitants of Canaan. This they magnify into an order encouraging rapine and blood. But it is to be considered that there is something peculiar in that order. The Canaanites were very abandoned sinners, and particularly infamous for idolatry, by which a standard was erected against God's throne. It was determined, that the folly and wickedness of such wretches should be fully exposed. The Israelites were used as the instruments of Providence for this purpose. Their destruction might have been effected by famine or pestilence. In either case none could have objected. The crime incurred the punishment; and must God, to satisfy the capricious humour of thoughtless creatures, confine himself to this or that instrument? May he not use one nation to punish another? By doing so in this instance was not an important end answered? With what face could the Israelites be idolaters, after they inflicted death upon the Canaanites for that same crime? Besides, the Israelites were immediately under the divine conduct, and had been so for forty years. The command given them was expressly directed against a nation that was incorrigible. This instance may guard the nations against idolatry, but can never encourage violence and murder.

The failings of some good men, and the crimes which they committed, are also brought forward in strong colours, and the most perverse advantage taken of them. David's behaviour is particularly marked, as countenancing barbarity and lust. But are David's crimes recorded with approbation? Did they not torture reflection? Were they not repented of, and publicly confessed? And were they not visited with divine severity? The infidel mistakes the scripture, and on his own mistakes grounds the vilest aspersions. Such attempts excite our pity

and our indignation. It is in vain to think of making an impression upon such perverted minds. Can the deaf adder be charmed with the melody of music? Can the lunatic be convinced by sober reasoning? The case of infidels and scoffers is in many instances desperate. It is not for them that we unfold the excellence of God's word, and insist upon its powerful energy. If we can satisfy the doubtful, and confirm the wavering, a great end is gained.

But what shall we say of those, who vilify the source of true wisdom; who contaminate the waters flowing in a pure stream from the throne of God; or deter from drinking those who are perishing for thirst? What shall we say of those, whose opposition to Christianity is disguised under the name of philanthropy; whose zeal rises to madness; who confirm by oath a discovery made known for the general good,—that the Scripture is an imposition, containing every thing vile and unworthy? Have such men eyes to see, or ears to hear, or hearts to perceive? Are not their hearts waxed gross, and their ears dull of hearing? Have they not closed their eyes, lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and be converted, and God should heal them? Trampling the pearl under their feet, they turn with savage fury upon those by whom it is held in estimation. Such men deserve contempt. Turn with abhorrence from their doctrine, and leave them with their conscience, and with God.

The infatuation of unbelievers gives us warning. It is a beacon announcing shoals and rocks. Practise God's commandments. Let his law be a light to your feet and a lamp to your way. Meditate thereon day and night. Avoid the counsel of the ungodly, the way of the sinner, and the seat of the scornful. Become as little children, yielding yourselves in an unreserved and cheerful manner to the mercy, protection, and guidance of your heavenly friend. Then you will be established in the faith. The rain, the flood, and the wind shall do you no injury. Your house, founded upon a rock, shall withstand the severest storm. PHILOLOGOS.

ORIGINAL LETTERS FROM AN AGED MINISTER TO A YOUNG STUDENT IN DIVINITY.

No. 7.

My dear Sir,

I SEE with pleasure that writing is easy to you: I hope it will be as much so on divine subjects as any other: And you, probably, will have less need of hints upon method of sermonizing, than most others. Still it may be safe to look over what has been written on the subject by several authors. And I know you will indulge me in a few thoughts which are now present with me, whether they have or have not met you elsewhere.

Young gentlemen who come with diffidence to composing sermons, are apt to be afraid of not finding enough to say: And that fear often occasions their continuing too long on the first branch or branches of their text,

and of consequence not doing justice to the last, and to the improvement. To avoid this, a scheme of outlines, which looks through a whole subject, and through the improvement, promises to be useful. It will assist our thinking faculties. It will thus be seen what ideas will rise naturally under each head; what scripture passages, or other valuable illustrations or enforcements, may be introduced with advantage, here or there: And some adjustment may be made, in the setting out, of the *proportions* of the several parts of the discourse. Perhaps one of the first objects in the arrangement of a sermon, is to proportion it justly.

But the prime object, of which we must never lose sight, is to communicate the great truths of God in a manner which will best commend them, as such, "to every man's conscience," and best impress them according to their nature.

Let the text then originate the sermon, and dictate, generally, all its sentiments. Let this be visible from first to last: For the good effect of a discourse greatly depends on its both being and appearing to be scriptural. If this does not appear, it is either neglected as wanting authority, or it is received as the word of man, and therefore not to the purposes of religion: for religion is built upon faith in God, not faith in the wisdom of men.

Having taken up, then, some sacred theme which comes home to men's bosoms, and their immortal interests; let us be sure, in the first place, that we understand it correctly. If there are doubts, examine the original; consult the best commentators. With particular care examine the connexion; and the occasion, as the case may be, on which the words were spoken; for these, in general, are the best expositors. Every part should be understood; but the ideas, which are most prominent, and which were principal in the intention of the sacred writer, should be the leading ideas of the discourse. Generally, the impression from the first reading will determine which they are: And generally, the expectation of sensible hearers, from the first reading in public, will be raised accordingly.

The old distinction of *veritas rei*, and *veritas loci*,* is a sensible one, and should always be remembered. The soundest doctrine should never be preached from a text which does not contain it: for *truth* is dishonoured when brought in out of place.

Beside pondering what our theme contains, it is good to collect, as the time will allow, all the principal ideas on the same subject, which are scattered here and there through the Scriptures; whether they go to explain or illustrate, to confirm or enforce it. I am every day more convinced that great use should be made of the concordance, upon every great subject;—as likewise of marginal references:—to compare scripture with scripture, and so be confirmed in its true meaning; to see the harmony of its parts, upon every great subject, and therein a stronger proof of its great Original; to see at the same time, the variety of lights in which the same great truths

* Truth real, and the truth in text.

are presented. By this they are understood the more fully; and you acquire a habit of thinking, at once more enlarged, and more correct. By this you are soon relieved of the anxiety abovementioned. You are furnished, in the setting out, both with variety and abundance of matter, and such as you are sure is of the very best kind:—so many affecting, so many sublime objects brought to view, and all in a manner perfectly corresponding with their nature; sentiment, argument, illustration, address, and turn of thought, all such as HE who knew what was in man, has himself adapted to impress the consciences and hearts of men. How proper is it that we should in this way come continually to the Holy Oracle, to know what we are to say, and in what manner! And when together with the authority, the majesty, the impressiveness, of the Scripture itself, upon all great subjects, we take a serious view of the state of our hearers, old and young, we are then most likely to understand and feel our subject, and treat it properly. Let us not fail, however, to implore the help of the Great Teacher, in every line of it.

The way is now prepared for sketching the outlines of a sermon, according to the hints above given; arranging the heads, and the leading thoughts under each, in as natural and lucid order as we are able. After this, it is best of all if some good portion of time can be taken, before we sit down to write, in reviewing those outlines over and over, contemplating the particular ideas which ought to fill them up—perhaps minuting some of the best: And this interval seems the most proper for reading able and pious authors on the same subject. I hope that a high esteem of such will be ever maintained; but servility is always to be avoided. I wish therefore that the general plan of discourse may be first sketched out; and as many particular ideas as naturally occur to our own best contemplations, without any other leading than that of holy Scripture itself. After this let us read at large, as we have time, and with careful attention. Perhaps we shall find some of our ideas corrected, valuable additional thoughts suggested: possibly some useful amendments of our general plan. Of all let us avail ourselves. But let all be naturalized; and still the sermon will be our own, and will appear to be, as all our performances should. And who knows but this unbiassed and unfettered manner of setting out on a subject, provided it be humble and prayerful too, may carry you into some ideas "which great men have overlooked?"

Here I must close my paper, and perhaps may resume the subject hereafter.

I am, &c.

BETA.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST AND SECOND RESURRECTION; REV. XX. 4—6.

IN adverting to the future state of the church, it is of some importance to ascertain, what is meant by the first resurrection. Many, and some of them persons of note for learning and piety, suppose that

during the thousand years, in which Satan is to be bound, Christ will reign personally and visibly upon earth, and that the newly raised saints and martyrs, which shall be raised at the beginning of the thousand years, which is the first resurrection, will form his principal ministers, and reign with him in glory.

This opinion is principally grounded on the literal meaning of Rev. xx. 4—6. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them, that were beheaded, for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark in their foreheads, nor in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again, until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he, that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." In favour of a literal interpretation of this passage I find it urged, that the most plain and obvious sense is always to be understood, as the true sense of a text; and that, as the literal sense is the most obvious, so it ought ever to be esteemed the true sense, unless in cases, where the connexion of the discourse, and the common use of the phrase in other places, show it to be used figuratively. But it is said there is nothing in this passage to induce us to put a figurative meaning on the first, any more, than on the second resurrection.

2. Though it be admitted that the book of Revelation is a very figurative and mystical book, and that it is many times very difficult to be certain, when the literal sense is the true sense; yet it is plain, that we cannot understand the second resurrection, and the general judgment in a figurative sense. But, if the first resurrection is to be understood figuratively, so must the second. If the first resurrection is to be understood of a general revival of religion, then the rest of the dead must mean the spiritually dead, or those who shall remain unconverted after the first resurrection. Consequently we must believe that all those, who remain unconverted, after that first resurrection, must remain unconverted, until the end of the thousand years, i. e. that all unconverted adults, and all children born during that period, must die in their sins. This is justly viewed, as a great absurdity; and, if it be a necessary consequence of the opinion that the first resurrection is a spiritual resurrection, certainly the literal meaning of the passage ought to be preferred.

But however this opinion may be sanctioned by the names of many eminent both for learning and piety; yet the reasons, adduced in support of it, appear to be more ingenious than solid. Good reasons may be given, notwithstanding all that is urged to the contrary, for understanding the resurrection, mentioned in this passage, rather in a figurative, than in a literal sense, and for believing all circum-

stances considered, that the figurative is, in this instance, the most obvious sense.

It is allowed on all hands that, if this passage ought to be understood of a literal resurrection of the saints and martyrs, this is the only passage of Scripture, in which that truth is revealed. And, as the prophetic parts of Scripture speak abundantly about the future state of the church, particularly about the millennium, it is at least very strange that so essential a part of it as the resurrection of the saints and martyrs, and the personal reign of Christ upon earth, should not only not be expressly mentioned, but not so much as once alluded to in any other part of sacred writ. This, it is true, is of itself no sufficient objection; for, where there is a plain, unequivocal "thus saith the Lord," one such express testimony is a sufficient foundation for our belief of any particular doctrine or fact. But whether this be that express testimony, or whether the passage may not be understood in a figurative sense, in a way perfectly agreeable to the scripture style and manner of expressing events of a similar nature, shall now be a subject of inquiry.

To understand this passage, it is necessary to ascertain, what is meant by the first resurrection; who by those, that have a part in it, and who by the rest of the dead, who are to live again at the expiration of the thousand years, and not before. Let it be observed, that the martyrs, who were slain for the witness of Jesus, and the rest of the dead, are the two sorts of slain persons of opposite characters, who are spoken of in this and the foregoing chapters. For a long time the enemies of Christ and his people had been in great power, and persecuted his faithful followers; putting many of them to death. To these John has reference, when he says, "I saw the souls of them, that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and the word of God, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Of their thus living again he speaks, when he says, "This is the first resurrection." By the rest of the dead we are to understand the hosts of enemies and persecutors, who had received the mark of the beast and worshipped his image, and who were slain by the sword, that proceeded out of the mouth of him, that sat on the white horse, i. e. of Christ. In the same manner, in which the martyrs, who had been slain for the witness of Jesus, were to live again, during the thousand years, were the rest of the dead, the enemies and persecutors, who had been slain by the sword of him, that sat upon the horse, to be raised at the expiration of that period, when Satan was to be loosed out of his prison, and go out to deceive the nations, which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle. It is not supposed that by the living of "the rest of the dead," at the expiration of the thousand years, we are to understand that the old enemies and persecutors of the church will be literally raised from the dead, to compose the armies of Gog and Magog; but the evidence in favour of a lite-

ral resurrection is equally strong in the one case, as in the other. The presumption therefore is, that both refer to a figurative resurrection, a resurrection of the *cause*, not of the individuals engaged in it. In this vast army of enemies, which was to compass the camp of the saints, under Gog and Magog, not the bodies, but the souls of the rest of the dead, of the remnant who were slain by the sword of Christ, were to live again: So in the preceding period, wherein Satan was bound, not the bodies, but the souls of the martyrs were seen by John, as living and reigning with Christ. Both the one and the other were to live and reign, not in their proper persons, but in their respective successors, who would be actuated by the same spirit, and make a part of the same body with themselves. After Satan was bound, John in vision saw a race of men of the same character and spirit with the ancient martyrs, and in reality their genuine successors, making a part of the same body, in whom the cause, for which they had suffered, revived and triumphed as really, as if they had been all raised from the dead. But, during this period, the enemies and persecutors of Christ and his cause lived not again; they had no successors openly to espouse their cause, and carry on the warfare against Christ and his people. But after this happy period, when Satan shall be let loose again out of his prison, a race of men will arise of the same spirit and temper with the ancient enemies and persecutors, by whom one more attempt will be made to support their cause, and distress and destroy the saints. Both the resurrection of the saints and martyrs at the commencement of the millennium, and that of the rest of the dead at the close of it, seem, even in this chapter, to be plainly distinguished from the literal resurrection, which is represented, as taking place, not at the end of the thousand years, when Satan was to be loosed, but after the final overthrow of Gog and Magog, the last enemies of Christ. This literal resurrection is described from ver. 11th, to the end of the chapter. This is represented, as a resurrection, not of the souls, but of the bodies of men; not as the resurrection of one class only, but of all characters and descriptions.

Taking the whole passage into view, to explain both the first resurrection and the living of the rest of the dead figuratively seems agreeable to the most obvious, natural sense. "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years," is a mode of expression no where used, unless it be here, to denote a literal resurrection of the body. Nay, it is so unlike the mode of expression, used in other places of Scripture, where a resurrection of the body is intended, that it is scarcely reasonable to suppose the same thing to be meant.

The reasons, why a figurative sense of this passage is preferred, will appear in a still stronger point of light, if we consider that the representation of the revival of a sinking cause by a *resurrection* is a figure, very commonly used in Scripture. The resurrection of the dry

bones, of which we have an account, Ezek. xxxvii. has a primary reference to the restoration of Judah and Jerusalem from the Babylonish captivity. But in this the figure of a resurrection is represented in quite as strong terms, as in the passage under consideration. "Thus saith the Lord God, behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you out of your graves." Under a similar figure Isaiah prophesies deliverance to Israel. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs." Turning from sin to God is frequently represented by this figure, Eph. v. 14; Col. iii. 1. The same kind of resurrection is intended by our blessed Lord, John v. 25. John the Baptist is also called Elias, not because he was the identical person of Elias, risen again, but because he went before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elias, and was therefore, in a figurative sense, Elias risen again. The reception of the Jews into the church of Christ, when in the latter day they shall turn unto the Lord, is also spoken of under the same figure, Rom. xi. 15.

The resurrection of the witnesses, at the end of the three days and a half, was not a literal resurrection of the same identical persons, but the resurrection of a race of men engaged in the same cause, and possessing the same spirit. Egypt and Babylon, the ancient enemies and oppressors of God's people, do after the same manner revive and live again, during the reign of the antichristian beast; Rome being called Egypt and Babylon, because in idolatry, wickedness, oppression, and persecution of God's people, she is the successor, and actuated by the same spirit with these ancient cities.

The description of particular events in language, borrowed from others, to which they bear some striking resemblance, is a very natural figure, and one very frequently used by the sacred penmen. Thus our Lord describes that dreadful catastrophe, the destruction of Jerusalem, in figures, borrowed from the consummation of all things; and the terror of the pagan enemies and persecutors of the church, upon the downfall of paganism and the elevation of Christianity to the imperial throne, is described in figures, borrowed from the terror of the wicked at Christ's second coming to judgment. Rev. vi. 13—17.

Scripture is universally allowed to be the best interpreter of Scripture. In the application of this rule of interpretation, the best method is to explain dark and obscure passages by such, as are plain. We have several very plain accounts of the resurrection and general judgment in the New Testament, to which it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile the doctrine of a literal resurrection of the saints, or even of the martyrs at the commencement of the millennium. The most particular account, which Christ himself

gives of this solemn event, is in Matt. xxv. 31, to the end.

This account is plainly inconsistent with the idea of a literal resurrection and a personal reign of the saints with Christ, so many years before the consummation of all things.

According to Paul's account of the resurrection, 1 Cor. xv. they that are Christ's will be raised at his second coming to judgment, and not before. At the sound of the same trumpet, by which the dead shall be raised, the saints then living will in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, be changed, and become incorruptible, like the newly raised saints. But is not this account of the resurrection totally inconsistent with the opinion, that vast numbers, even all the martyrs at least, will be raised at the beginning of the millennium, and made equal with the angels, and reign with Christ in glory; while all the saints living at that time, as well as the vast multitudes, who will be born and converted, during the thousand years of unexampled spiritual prosperity, are to die and remain in their graves until the end of the world. An account of similar import, and equally inconsistent with a literal resurrection and personal reign, we have 1 Thess. iv.

From these considerations and others which might be mentioned, it appears both more rational and more scriptural, and even the most obvious sense of the text, to understand the first resurrection in a figurative sense, and that the millennium will be a spiritual, and not a personal reign of Christ upon earth.

T.

ON SELF-ACQUAINTANCE.

The knowledge of ourselves is important, because without it, we shall never take our proper places, nor gain a sight of our obligations. This knowledge is always a fruit of solemnly calling ourselves to an account, and of carefully watching the exercises of our minds. Who does not know, that two persons may for many years live in the same neighbourhood, and yet be so inattentive to each other, as never to form a particular acquaintance? They may readily recognize each other's *features* and *voices*; and at the same time, in an important sense, remain *strangers*. Equally supposable is it, that a person may live, in this world, a very great stranger to *himself*. He may be busily employed, all his days, and may even distinguish himself for his exertions to obtain certain ends, which the world may call laudable; and yet never cultivate an acquaintance with his own heart. With all his fame for worldly wisdom, he may have neglected to call himself to an account, as a candidate for eternity; and, of course, when summoned to appear before his God, he may find himself awfully deficient in that kind of knowledge, which is the most important.

It is manifest, that they who view themselves, as they ought, find time, notwithstanding all the cares of this busy and ensnaring world, to call home their wandering thoughts, and to commune with their own hearts. In this way, the *faithful* in every age have obtained a sight of their own vileness. Their seasons of retirement and meditation per-

sons of this description have highly regarded. If, through unfaithfulness, they have neglected these seasons, the consequences have always been painful. They have become, as it were, afraid of themselves. They have felt that kind of embarrassment, in renewing an acquaintance with their own hearts, which is felt by two persons, who, for a great length of time, have neglected each other. Conscious of having become strangers, they know not how, at first, to use freedom.

To observe seasons of retirement is a compliance with the duty, enjoined by our divine Teacher, of "entering into the closet and of shutting the door." The object of such retirement is meditation, prayer and self-acquaintance; a privilege which has been sought by the true friends of God in every age of the world. Of the patriarch Isaac we read, that "he went out to meditate in the field at the even-tide." Jacob, under his troubles, was alone, all night, wrestling in prayer. David, as appears from his writings, was often employed in thinking on his own ways; or in reviewing his life and examining his heart. To such precious seasons he alluded, when he penned the following words, in the 77th Psalm: "In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted. I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Thou holdest my eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak. I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times. I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart; and my spirit made diligent search." And in another Psalm: "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. I made haste, and delayed not, to keep thy commandments." Had not this pious man, amidst all his cares, reserved some time to commune with his own heart, he would have lived and died, like most other men, a stranger to himself. At the close of an active and laborious life, he might have taken up the sad lamentation, *They made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept.*

But, we have a brighter example than that of David, or of the patriarchs. The Saviour of the world had his seasons of withdrawing from the multitude, who thronged around him to hear his instructions, and even from the disciples who composed his particular family, that he might commune with God and his own heart. This he viewed an important part of his duty, and, by his example, he has enjoined the same on all his friends.

The hours of retirement and self-examination, which have now been represented to be so important, will, however, fail of being important to those who observe them, unless they are *rightly improved.* At such seasons, we must have God's *holy law* in our view. Can we weigh our characters, without having recourse to some *standard?* The great standard, or test of character, is the divine law. Every character is viewed by the

Searcher of hearts to be bad or good, according to this standard. This, therefore, we ought to carry with us to our closets, and places of retirement. Into this we ought carefully to look, as into a glass, that we may know what manner of persons we are. The law, in all its strictness and purity, should be imprinted on our minds. How expressive of a strong attachment to the divine law are the following words of David. "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day." It appears that the law was his delight, not because he expected to obtain salvation by it, but because he saw it to be holy. He loved its perfection and purity. Though by this standard, he stood condemned, yet he was inclined to weigh himself by it; and the more faithfully he attended to this, the greater sense he had of his own imperfection and vileness. He saw the commandment to be exceedingly broad. With all this the experience of the apostle Paul perfectly corresponds. "I had not known sin (said he) but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."

From the united testimony of these inspired men, David and Paul, we learn that all, who have been brought to see themselves to be *sinners*, have gained this knowledge by looking into God's holy law. Many, doubtless, have their seasons of retirement and meditation, who remain exceedingly ignorant of themselves, because when they have entered their closets, they have always neglected to take the divine law with them. Were they now to do this, and to be faithful in comparing themselves with this standard, their imagined attainments in religion might possibly vanish like the morning dew, before the rising sun; and they might tremble as king Josiah did, when he heard the words of the book of the law, which had long been lost. While men suffer themselves to be ignorant of the law, they feel very whole, and practically say, that they stand in no need of a physician.

To obtain a knowledge of ourselves, we must also carefully compare our feelings and practice with the requirements of the *gospel*. The gospel, it is true, is good news to sinners. But, does it promise any good to sinners, who remain *impenitent?* Does it countenance men in their *sins?* No; the requirements of the gospel are strict, and, like the law, which we have been considering, they try the hearts of men. The language of the gospel is, "He that believeth shall be saved." An infinite favour is here promised, on a certain condition. The condition is, that we renounce all dependence on our own strength, acknowledge ourselves to be in a helpless and hopeless condition, and that we embrace, with our hearts, the all-perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. Without that faith, which implies all this, what benefit are we to expect from the gospel? None at all; for the gospel, considered

as an overture of God to fallen men, *threatens* as well as *promises*. Therefore it is added, "he that believeth not shall be damned." A preached gospel, misimproved, will leave men in a state an hundred fold more to be dreaded than that of the heathen.

Besides; the gospel presents to us many crosses, which we must daily take up, or lose our souls. Speaking on this subject, our divine Saviour said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

With these views of the gospel we should enter our closets, and solemnly ask ourselves, as in the presence of God, whether we have complied with the conditions. If, on examination, we find that our faith is not of that kind, which leads to purity of life, and which influences us to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, what does it profit? If we find, that our religion does not consist in self-denial; if it does not make us feel interested in the honour and glory of the divine Redeemer; if it does not make us prize the worship of God in his house, in our families and in our closets; what important end do we expect will be answered by it? The gospel is represented by its divine Author to be a test of character. Men are to know themselves by coming into the light of it Therefore it is written, "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But, he that doeth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

If the wicked obtain any conviction of their ruined state, it must take place in consequence of comparing themselves with the pure oracles of God, with the *law* and the *gospel*. And if Christians are brought to have any just sight of their many imperfections, to lie low before God, and to feel the necessity of struggling against sin, they will attain to this, by retiring from the world, and studying the word of God with self-application, and with particular reference to the state of their own souls. Convicted of the greatness of their danger, and of the magnitude of their wants, they are constrained to cry for help, as the publican did; not mentioning their own good deeds, but saying, "God be merciful to us sinners." No longer do they say in their hearts, that their farms, their flocks, their merchandize and their earthly companions call so loudly for their attention, that God must be put off, and eternal concerns dispensed with; no longer do they say, "To-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant;" but, they make haste, and delay not, to keep the divine commandments.

H.

ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT.

In a Series of Letters to a Friend.

(Continued from page 515.)

LETTER III.

The Doctrine illustrated, proved, and defended from Scripture.

DEAR SIR,

IT is asserted that, when Christ is said to have borne our griefs and sins, the word in the original sometimes signifies merely to *take away*. We need not then imagine that our sins, guilt, and punishment were laid on him, or borne by him, but only that he freed us from them, or took them away from us.

I answer, though the word here used may sometimes bear the sense here mentioned; yet Socinus himself owns that the phrase, *bearing of sins and sorrows*, commonly means bearing them, as a burden is borne, or suffering under them. This is evidently the meaning of the threatening, which so often occurs in Scripture against transgressors, "He shall bear his iniquity." Grotius, one of the most learned critics, says, that in the language of the Scriptures, bearing of sins always signifies bearing the *guilt* or suffering the *punishment* of them. I cannot find that it ever has a different meaning. That the phrase is to be so understood in this place, is plainly intimated and implied, when it is said, "*The Lord laid our iniquities upon him.*" This heavy burden, which would have crushed and sunk the world, was laid upon him, that he might bear it, and so free us from it. The prophet has also declared, that this was his meaning. Having said of Christ, "He hath borne our griefs," he adds, "and *carried our sorrows*;" and afterwards, "He shall justify many, for he shall *bear* their iniquities." Here a different word is used in the Hebrew [sabal] which always signifies to carry a load. Christ carried our sorrows and iniquities, when he was wounded, bruised, and chastized or punished for our sins. St. Peter also says, that "He bare our sins." (the guilt and punishment of them) "in his own body on the tree." He freed us from the burden of our guilt by taking it upon himself, and making satisfaction for it on the cross.

But the words of Matthew are objected, who speaks of Christ's healing the sick, as a fulfilment of the words of Esaias, "Himself took our infirmities, and bear our sicknesses." Christ did not transfer the diseases of the sick to himself, but healed them; and so took them away. This shows how the words of the prophet were understood, and applied by the evangelist. I answer; the words of the prophets are in the New Testament sometimes applied by way of allusion, or accommodation, to events, which the prophets did not primarily and chiefly mean. Dr. Clark accordingly observes, that, though the original meaning of Esaias is the same with that of the apostle, when he said, "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many;" yet the words of the prophet might also be accommodated to Christ's healing the sick, and in that sense be said to be fulfilled or verified. Besides, it

should be considered, that Christ's sufferings have obtained for us our temporal, as well as spiritual mercies; our bodies, as well as our souls, are healed by his stripes. His wearisome labours in going about to do good and heal the sick, and his tender compassion for them, might also, in some sense, be termed his taking and bearing their infirmities. All the sufferings in his life, as well as at his death, were for our sins, and were a part of the price, by which all our mercies were purchased for us.

The words of the apostle, which have just been mentioned, are a strong proof, that the burden of our sin and guilt was laid or charged upon Christ, and borne by him. "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; but to them that look for him, he shall appear without sin unto salvation." When he was *offered* as a sacrifice, our guilt was assumed by him, the punishment, due to us for sin, was inflicted upon him, and borne by him. But at his second coming he will appear *without sin*; that is, without bearing our sins, as when he was offered or sacrificed for them. Christ was always without sin in himself. But, when he was offered for us, the burden of our guilt and punishment lay upon him. But by satisfying the penal obligation, he was under, he freed himself from this burden; he bears it no longer. So that at his second coming he will appear, not only without sin in himself, but also without bearing the guilt and punishment of our sins, as he did, when he was offered, as a sacrifice for them. This seems to be the obvious sense of the apostle's words. What could have been said more fully in point?

This last passage, which we have been considering, suggests to us another important topic of argument, often mentioned by the apostles; and that is, that Christ suffered and died, as an atoning sacrifice for sin. "He gave himself for us an offering and sacrifice to God. Christ our passover was sacrificed for us. Through the eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot unto God. Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

A sacrifice has been defined by some, "a thing devoted to God." But the most important, essential, and discriminating properties of an atoning sacrifice are wholly left out of this definition. Both the Hebrew and Greek word for a sacrifice signifies *a slain victim*. In sacrifices for sin the shedding of the blood was necessary. Without it there was no remission. A sin-offering was a victim slain, and offered to God, to make atonement for the sins of the person, for whom it was offered, that so his sin might be forgiven, or not imputed to him.

In these sacrifices under the law the victim was represented, as substituted in the place or stead of the persons, for whom it was sacrificed, and their sins and guilt were represented, as transferred to the victim, which must bleed and die instead of the sinners, in order to make atonement, and obtain forgiveness for them. The sin, the criminality, the fault, was never imagined to be infused or communi-

cated to the victim; but the guilt and the punishment, belonging to the transgressor, were represented in a type, as transferred to his substitute, who is therefore said to *bear the sins*, that were typically laid upon him. See Levit. xvi. Here was a striking representation of vicarious guilt and punishment.

Now, what was represented in the typical sacrifice, was done in truth and reality in the sacrifice of Christ. Though our sins were not infused into him; though the blame-worthiness, implied in sin and inseparable from it, was not communicated to him, nor was God displeased with him; though his beloved Son was never more the object of the Father's complacency, than when he was offered to bear the sins of many; yet the guilt and punishment of sin, the obligation to satisfy justice, by bearing the curse of the law, was transferred; assigned to him, and taken upon himself, as our sponsor, and thus, as Paul says, He *put it away*, or abolished the penal bond, which we were under, by the sacrifice of himself.

To evade this argument, it has been said, "that Christ is termed a sacrifice for sin only in a figurative sense, and in allusion to the levitical sacrifices." But what reason have we to give any credit to unsupported assertions? We may say with more reason, that the expiatory sacrifices under the law were such only in a figurative sense. For they were but figures, shadowy or typical representations of the sacrifice of Christ, the only true, real, and substantial propitiation. "The doctrine of the apostle," says Bishop Butler, "is plainly this, that the legal sacrifices were allusions to the great and final atonement to be made by the blood of Christ, and not that this was an allusion to those." The priesthood sacrifices and atonements of the law were but figures of the priesthood sacrifice and atonement of Christ, who was the substance or original, of which the others were only patterns, or typical representations.

There were indeed eucharistic sacrifices, or thank offerings. These might be unbloody. In allusion to these, Christians are exhorted to "present themselves to God *living sacrifices*; to offer to God the *sacrifice* of praise, which is the fruit of their lips, giving thanks to his name; and not to forget to do good, and communicate, for with such *sacrifices* God is well pleased." But the nature and design of these are entirely different from atoning sacrifices. The sacrifice, by which Christ made atonement, necessarily required the shedding of his blood, and bearing our sins, and the curse of the law, on the cross. Without this our guilt must still have remained upon us.

We have the testimony of the apostle Paul again to the point in hand, "God hath made Christ to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." The expressions are figurative, but the general purport of the passage seems obvious enough. To this purpose "*God made Christ to be sin for us*," the guilt and punishment of sin were laid upon him, and borne by him in our stead, *though he knew no sin* in himself, "*that we might be*

made," *or become* "*the righteousness of God ;*" that the righteousness of Christ, which is the righteousness of God, might become ours ; given and imputed to us by God, that so we might be accepted, as righteous *in him*, by virtue of *our union to him*, or by the merit of a righteousness *inherent in him*, but placed to our account.

If this be the meaning of the text, it is a direct and decisive testimony, that our guilt was transferred to Christ, as the ground of his sufferings ; and that we are justified by his righteousness *imputed* to us.

But many take the apostle's meaning to be, that God made Christ to become a *sin offering* for us, that we might be justified by his righteousness. Now it has already been observed, that the sin offering is represented, as bearing the guilt and punishment of the person, for whom it was offered. Therefore Christ's being a sin offering for us supposes, and proves the imputation or transferring of our guilt to him.

Farther ; the Scriptures teach us that we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son ; that we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sin ; that the Lord imputeth not sin, but imputeth to believers righteousness without works of their own. Now it seems inconceivable, that the merit and death of Christ should be any reason or motive with God to be reconciled to sinners, who had offended him, unless it be considered, as a satisfaction for their offences. The death of Christ turns away God's anger from sinners, or prevents their punishment, though justly deserved, because God's holiness and justice, his love of righteousness and hatred of wickedness, and his regard for his own rights and honour, and for the interests of his kingdom, are as much exercised and expressed in the vicarious sufferings of their sponsor, as they would have been in the punishment of sinners. If those moral truths (as some speak) which are manifested in the punishment of the guilty, are manifested in as strong a light in the sufferings and death of Christ in their stead ; then the punishment of the guilty no longer appears to be necessary. Nothing stands in the way of their being pardoned, and of their recovering peace with God. But, unless Christ be considered as the sponsor of sinners, making satisfaction for their sins in their stead (which evidently supposes that their guilt or penal obligation has been transferred to him) how can it be reconciled with our clearest and surest notions of the justice of God, for him to inflict on Christ the punishment of sin, the curse of the law, *for sin*, *for our sin*, when it was not supposed to be due to him for any sin in him, or imputed to him. This seems so far from declaring the righteousness of God, that to me it appears inconsistent with righteousness, and destructive of the foundation of all moral truths. I must frankly own that I cannot conceive, how the death of Christ can be a reason or ground of God's being reconciled to us, unless it were considered, as a satisfaction of divine justice for our penal debt ; nor can I conceive, how our debt could be satisfied for by the suffering of our sponsor, unless our obligation to make

penal satisfaction, (in order that the ends, for which the punishment of sin is necessary, may be answered) were transferred to Christ; that is, in fewer words, unless our guilt were *imputed* to him. If those, who deny such imputation, can rationally or intelligibly make it appear, that God's love of righteousness and hatred of sin are expressed by his treating his own Son, as if he had been a sinner, by inflicting on him the curse of the law, which is due only to sin, when it is supposed, that there was no sin or guilt charged upon him; and that this is a good reason for God's being reconciled to sinners, showing him to be just in justifying them; we will readily attend to them. But, I must confess, this is beyond my weak understanding.

But we are told that the Scriptures do not say that God is reconciled to us, but that we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son. God shewed himself reconciled to us by sending his Son, to reconcile us to himself.

I answer. Though God was not reconciled to sinners previously to his appointing the Mediator, to make atonement for sin; yet he had a kindness, a pity for them; was willing to be reconciled to them in a way consistent with his own honour and the interest of his kingdom. And he sent his Son, to do what was necessary to prepare and open a way for their being pardoned, and received into his favour. This he did by bearing the guilt and punishment of their sin, as their sponsor.

Nor is there any weight in the observation, that the Scriptures do not say expressly that God is reconciled to us by Christ. For in the common language of the Scriptures, our being reconciled to God means the same thing. When Paul says, we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son, he evidently means, what he had expressed in the next foregoing verse, that we are justified by his blood. And he has again explained our reconciliation to God, as importing his not imputing our sins to us. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing to them their trespasses." In the same manner the phrase is to be understood, when the lords of the Philistines, speaking of David, said, "Wherewith should he reconcile himself to his Master," i. e. reconcile Saul to him, regain his favour, "should it not be with the heads of these men?" The word bears the same sense in Mat. v. 24, "When thou bringest thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother," i. e. reconcile thy offended brother to thee. The word bears the same meaning also 1 Cor. vii. 11.

It has been observed before, that we were redeemed, or ransomed from death by Christ, by his blood, by his dying for our sins, receiving the wages, the just punishment of sin, *for our sins*, bearing the curse of the law in our stead; which necessarily implies that our guilt was transferred to him, and borne by him.

It may also be added, that since the wages of sin, or the curse of the law, was not due to Christ on his own account, it

would be contrary to our clearest notions of justice, for him to bear the curse and punishment of our sins, unless our guilt, or penal bond, had been taken upon himself. If it be said, that Christ, though not subject to guilt, might yet justly bear the curse, since he was willing to bear it; I answer, Christ was willing to be our sponsor, and as such to make satisfaction for our sins, for which he became responsible. But he was not willing to suffer the punishment of sins, the guilt of which was not imputed to him. Nor ought any one to be willing to be punished for sins, for which he is in no way responsible. For no one ought to be willing that injustice should be done. If we should suppose a person willing to suffer punishment, which was on no account due to him; this would not render the inflicting of such punishment less unjust, but it would render the sufferer accessary to the injustice.

In short, I cannot see how the sufferings of the Son of God, the Holy One and the Just, sufferings greater, than man ever endured, can be reconciled with the justice and goodness of God, or declare his righteousness in the forgiveness and justification of sinners, or answer the ends, for which punishment of sin is necessary, or be any reason, why God may forgive and be reconciled to sinners; unless we admit, what seems to me to be the plain, obvious doctrine of the Scriptures, that our guilt, our penal obligation, was taken upon himself, and that he suffered for our sins, and in our stead, punishment equivalent, in the divine estimation and acceptance, to what was due to us for sin.

I have now, dear Sir, exhibited as plainly as I could, what seems to me to be the scripture doctrine of the atonement. I have endeavoured to express my ideas intelligibly, and with precision. My proposed brevity would not allow me to enlarge in illustrating the proofs, which have been adduced, nor to introduce several other topics of argument. This, I imagine, was not expected, nor desired. I know there are shrewd objections to this doctrine. But, if it appear to be agreeable to the Scriptures, a Christian need not be much moved by them, though he should not be able fully to solve all difficulties, by reason of the weakness of his reason, and the narrowness of his views. But a brief answer to some of the most common and considerable objections, I have met with, may be attempted, perhaps, in another epistle. In the mean time I shall remain your friend and humble servant, with much respect and affection.

A Christian of the Ancient School.

Miscellaneous.

ON THE STATE OF LITERATURE IN NEW ENGLAND.

(Concluded from p. 524.)

We have seen that some of the changes, which have lately taken place, wear a favourable aspect. There are many things, however, less promising than could be desired. Science may even in this favoured country be

surrounded with cypress, rather than decorated with myrtle, or with laurel. She may well mourn that so many obstacles are yet to be overcome, that so many advantages, as might here be enjoyed, should be neglected and despised; that in a land remarkably blessed with respect to soil and climate, a land proverbial as the dwelling place of liberty, she should be slighted when put in competition with the most unworthy pursuits, and the basest gratifications. Thus reflecting, we are insensibly led to inquire, why the interests of learning are not in a more favourable state.

Might I be permitted to use language moderately figurative, I should say, that the first thing under this head, which strikes an observer, is, that the religion of the country is exceedingly unfavourable to literature. This may appear an odd assertion; but I trust it can be shown, that the god, who is the object of this religion, is a being the most sordid and base, and that he has the complete possession of the hearts of his votaries. His name is Mammon. Though covered with some disguise, and denying his real name, his footsteps are every where traced, and his worship every where offered. In the mechanic's workshop, behind the merchant's counter, in the farmer's granary, and the lawyer's office, no less than in the sumptuous edifice, and the more princely dome, his altars are erected; to him daily sacrifices are made; to him matins and vespers are chanted; to him many a fervent prayer is indited by the heart, if it does not escape the lips. Scarcely the image on the plain of Dura received more implicit homage, or more unqualified adoration. There certainly were Three Worthies, and there probably were many humble and unnoticed Jews, who disdained to bow down to the golden god; so now, it is to be hoped, there are some exceptions to the prevailing system of idolatry; an idolatry which is totally at war with the liberal expansion, and the vigorous efforts of a free mind; which paralizes every noble attempt, and extinguishes the fire of genius.

To speak in plainer language, that state of society cannot be favourable to the interests of science, in which money is so generally considered the great essential of excellence, as it is at the present time in this country. Since the revolution there has been a remarkable influx of wealth, and as remarkable an increase in elegance and taste; taste, I mean, in eating and drinking, and in destroying time. He, therefore, who can appear to be the richest man, will find little difficulty in gaining notice and honour. It cannot be expected that there should be many worldly inducements to sedulous study, and the prosecution of difficult attainments, when the fortunate speculator, or even the lucky gambler, can appear in society to much better advantage, and receive more universal attention, than the most finished and laborious scholar. It has even become a maxim, that if a young man of a liberal education has no more flattering prospects with respect to money, than others who have not enjoyed his advantages, he has gained nothing as a recompense for his

time and labour. It is true that all men do not join in this estimation. Those who are possessed of judgment and principle rarely agree with the world in its opinions. But I speak of that as a maxim, which is so received by mankind in general. Nor are talents always buried under this discouragement. The pen of a Johnson sometimes ransoms its owner from oblivion and contempt: It sometimes raises him on high at once, and gives him, from his elevation, to command respect with silent, yet irresistible authority. But how many, possessed of similar mental endowments, sink before they have opportunity to display their powers, merely because that favour and support, which is due to merit, is denied them, and transferred to coxcombs, and blockheads.

Nearly allied to the love of money, and a thing which springs from its indulgence, is extravagance in living; a trait in the general character, which is also very injurious to the cause of learning. That this has increased to an alarming degree for a number of years past, is a matter entirely without debate. It is known and lamented, by every sincere friend to his country, and to happiness. The fashion in this particular throws many obstructions in the path of knowledge, and encumbers the traveller with many difficulties. Numbers of those who, from their habits of industry and economy, and the necessity of improving their advantages, would bid fair to become the best scholars, are not unfrequently discouraged from attempting to procure a public education, on account of the unavoidable expenses attending it. For the same reason, many, when they first enter from the College into the world, with the hope and design of pursuing science, find themselves obliged to abandon their books, and bestir themselves with not a little activity to acquire property sufficient to maintain a decent appearance among their fellow men. It is also to be regretted, that at the same time that extravagance is encouraged, extreme parsimony is used with respect to the means of education. Many a father would grudge a petty sum to be laid out in books, while he would think his son acting a manly part, if ten times as much were spent in costly dress, or frivolous amusements. No spirit which exists among men is so niggardly, when money is to be expended for any good purpose, as the spirit of extravagance.

On the heels of profusion always tread dissipation and vice. That these are the enemies of all laudable endeavours, needs not to be proved. Yet these baleful evils have stalked over the land with a giant stride, captivating and enslaving the youth, the flower of our country. It is owing to the firm resistance, and the paternal watchfulness of good instructors, that they have not ruined the more important seminaries, even in New England, where the most manful opposition has been made. Pleasure and study can have no union; they cannot even coexist in the same person. By pleasure is intended that round of sensual gratification, and that affectation of happiness, so common among the empty, and the

licentious, which have conspired to usurp so deceitful a name. The mind which has once acquired a fondness for riotous mirth, and which has condescended to degrade itself by unworthy indulgence, cannot relish a confinement to faithful application, nor endure the stillness of academic bowers.

Some inconveniences of no small magnitude arise from the infancy of our country. Literature has here never been pursued, as the employment of a whole life. That a young man should addict himself entirely to scientific pursuits, regardless of pecuniary concerns, would be esteemed a thing entirely new; and many of his acquaintance would be ready to cry out, that he was beside himself. Indeed, few who have any desire of learning could possibly afford to live without some productive business. Scarcely does the student begin to make progress in the labours of the mind, before he is interrupted by the deficiency of his purse, and diverted from his contemplated advances in learning, by the near approach of the horrors of penury. The time is much to be desired, when individuals, who are fond of study and retirement, may be possessed of such a competency, as to leave the getting of money to others, and devote themselves to science entirely; or when private munificence shall have made provision for the encouragement and support of those, who are disposed to be useful, without engaging in the bustle of the world. Then may our country produce men not suffering in a comparison with the first of the human race, if, indeed, we cannot, in a few instances, now make that boast, under all our discouragements.

The circumstances which make it necessary that a student should leave his books, and engage in active life, lead him into such habits as almost of course preclude him from any farther prosecution of his studies. There are some such exceptions as Dr. Johnson, that eminently learned civilian, of whom Connecticut may well be proud. But it is much to be wondered at, if the mind, which has been employed in drawing declarations, and making out fee-bills, for years, should be capable of expanding so as to delight in the higher branches of learning. Those who are eminent in a profession, are usually crowded with professional business; and those who are not, are obliged to submit to inferior drudgery. In either case, the man seems too much trammelled to think of excelling in scientifical pursuits.

Besides, there is little encouragement to literary performances of our own countrymen, after they are accomplished. Perhaps not a single meritorious work of genius, written by an American, has met with a liberal patronage in the United States; though the vilest productions which Europe disgorges, have been purchased with avidity. While this is the case, it cannot be strange that, rather than strive after excellence, where there is so much reason to despair of obtaining either honour or support, young men should apply themselves to pur-

suits of better prospect, in which, though their talents may be hidden, they can keep themselves from poverty and want.

The spirit of the times may also be seen in the slender support which is given to instructors of youth. It is not an uncommon thing for music masters, mountebanks, and dancing masters to receive triple the pecuniary support that is given to young gentlemen of the best hopes and most unblemished characters, who have spent all their property in gaining their education, and who have under their care the children of the ablest, and every way the first men of the land.

An opinion has likewise crept abroad, that whatever is not dazzling, is to be regarded as of little importance; an opinion not only groundless and false, but very unfavourable to useful and patient investigation. If we search for men who have most extended the boundaries of science, and who have performed such essential services, as to deserve the appellation of benefactors of mankind, we shall not find them among those who made the most noise and uproar in their day, who glittered and dazzled for a time, and behaved as though, like Atlas, they bore the heavens on their shoulders. It is not an unsound maxim of Horace,

"*Nil sine magno*
Vita labore dedit mortalibus."

"Human life has granted nothing to men without great industry." Those trees which are to stand for ages, are slow and imperceptible in their growth, while the mushroom springs, and withers, in a day. Constant and persevering exertions in the cultivation of the mind, as in that of the soil, seldom fail to produce some correspondent effects; while the desultory efforts of those, who make haste to be eminent, are without force, being made without any well digested plan. Yet it is common in this country to ridicule that industry in literary pursuits, by which every thing valuable is attained, and that attention to common things, and common sense, by which men are principally benefited. A striking instance of this, is the manner in which a very valuable member* of the community has been treated by some of his fellow citizens. That the gentleman, to whom I refer, has rendered much assistance to the youth of our country, no person will have the injustice to deny; & surely it reflects little honour on any person to stigmatize endeavours to make the education of youth easy, as a pursuit unworthy of the most exalted talents, and the most benevolent heart. It is by attending to the things of ordinary life, that Count Rumford has performed such acceptable services to the world.

I shall mention but one more cause unfriendly to learning, though the catalogue might easily be enlarged. It is the influence of party politics. Such is the unhappy state of our country that the clamours of partisans excite more attention, than the calls of utility, or even of necessity. There is now

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* Mr. Webster.

found to be a summary way of rising into consequence. It seems that wisdom to decide, and vigour and integrity to execute, are not now numbered among the qualifications of a politician; but they are supplanted by confidence to assert, and impudence to persist. The candidate for distinction joins himself to a party, or, in more philosophical language, to a sect, and labours without hesitation and without respite, to make himself acceptable to the people, or the great men under whose banners he enlists, or both. If assiduity and zeal could insure success, he would be little likely to meet with disappointment. In the mean time, his passions take side, and carry on through affected regard for the public, what he at first engaged in through motives of private interest. Thus the vigour and sprightliness of youth, instead of being improved in such a way as to be useful to mankind, and pleasant as well as profitable to the possessor, are wasted in frivolous debates, and local animosities. Not to mention, that a mind under the influence of passion and selfishness, diminishes as to its capacity, and becomes less and less capable of being wisely directed, till its powers are spent in bootless conflicts with enemies whom it would be no honour to vanquish, or in the service of men, who have little regard for the instrument, if the end is accomplished.

In this enumeration of things favourable, and of those unfavourable to literature, in New England, it has been my intention to remark upon those only which are particularly observable at the present time. There are others which have operated ever since the country was settled. Such for instance is that prominent one, the auspicious influence of the clergy; whose general and uniform character has been that of friends to freedom of opinion, and of every thing which tends to increase real knowledge. But the time would not permit a particular discussion of all the topics which present themselves.

On the whole, then, it seems, that there is little encouragement offered to the student in this country. Save the tranquillity of his own mind, the consciousness of having improved his time as he ought, and the hope of doing some good, he can have little to stimulate him to action, or inspirit him in his arduous undertaking. These motives are sufficient, it is acknowledged, where, on account of external circumstances, they are not debarred their natural influence; but, among men in general, something more strongly felt, and more easily grasped at, is needed.

To tell what remedies may possibly be applied, would require experience and information which the writer cannot pretend to possess. There appears no difficulty, however, in deciding, that a change in the public opinion, with respect to the importance of learning, must take place, before any very salutary alteration in common practice can be expected. Till this shall be done, it is hard to say, what subordinate changes may be wrought, and what smaller advantages gained. Without

dispute, there is wealth enough in the community to do all that can be done by liberal endowments. Whenever men shall feel as generously disposed towards colleges, and the votaries of science, as they now do towards theatres, and parties, learning will be encouraged, and the labours of the student amply remunerated.

After the cursory view which has been taken, it is a natural subject of inquiry, what are the duties especially incumbent upon the friends of science, in order that her interests may be best promoted? To this purpose it would probably have no small efficacy, if they were uniformly to exhibit themselves as the friends and advocates of virtue. The truth is, that numbers among the great body of mankind are not a little afraid of learning; & perhaps, if the affair is canvassed, their suspicions will not be found entirely destitute of plausibility. They have seen splendid talents, and high literary attainments prostituted to feed selfishness, to pamper pride, to flatter wealth and power, to corrupt and destroy mankind. They have seen the mind of man, that of Mr. Hume for instance, irradiated by genius, and enlarged by study and contemplation, labouring to invalidate evidence, and obscure truth, to "darken counsel by words without knowledge," and to envelope the whole moral world in gloom. They have seen the same mind employed, in exciting and stimulating the passions, and in extending the means, and improving the manner of their gratification. They have seen reason dethroned, virtue depressed, and every evil lust exalted to uncontrolled dominion. Even poesy, a nymph of celestial origin, they have seen made subservient to the basest purposes, and the most unhallowed pollutions. All these things, it is true, can be proved to be abuses of what is a real blessing: but ought not the character of learning to be retrieved from the infamy which would, not unnaturally, cling to it, from the conduct of its professors? And ought it not to be a matter of special attention, that it should be practically shown to be favourable to peace, harmony, and love among men, and sincere piety towards God?

There is another practical influence, of no small importance to the happiness of our country, which literary men may possess. I refer to the influence which would result from vigorous exertions to support and preserve the institutions of New England. In this secluded corner of a corrupted world, the seeds of happiness were sown by exiled Christians, of whom the Eastern Continent was not worthy; and by the goodness of Providence the seeds took root, and produced a plentiful harvest. Here liberty and law have walked hand and hand, shedding around them a shower of blessings. The man who can assist in repelling the dangers which threaten the destruction of these things, will confer a high obligation on mankind.

The spirit of infidelity and of hatred to the truth has been long lying in wait to lay sacrilegious hands on all that we have most reason to esteem precious. As to the triumph of party, it is all

of little significance, when compared with the importance of our schools, our churches, the family instruction and subordination which have prevailed, and the general manners, which cannot have a more happy designation than that of steady habits. Tho' these have been made a subject of reproach by our enemies, let us count them our glory. While possessed of these we need not fear the deprivation of liberty. There is also something truly noble in being engaged in defence of truth. Such a champion, as a Wilberforce, claims an elevation in the view of judgment and conscience, compared with which thrones and diadems are the dust of the street.

Before this subject is dismissed, I would mention one inducement which young men have, at the present time particularly, to engage with ardour in the pursuit of literary knowledge. It is, that they may be fitted for usefulness in the world, and yet retain the situation of private men. The state of politics in the American Union is lamentable, and the prospect lamentable, far as the eye can reach. The prevalence of intrigue, and of electioneering for public office, will of itself prevent the most worthy persons, in ordinary cases, from being elected. And the most natural result of the process is, that the tenure of office should be irksome to all who are possessed of firmness and integrity, and sought only by those who can barter conscience to the highest bidder. The clamours of party threaten in future to drown the voice of wisdom, and the most vociferous bawler is likely to be esteemed by many as the most meritorious man. In such times, when "the post of honour is a private station," it is the part of prudence steadily to maintain a fondness for private life; to retire with books and friends, and make it the constant design to be actively, though silently, engaged in something which may benefit mankind.

C. Y. A.

Selections.

ON SELF-DECEPTION, FROM THE CASE OF JOHN THE BAPTIST'S HEARERS.

When John the Baptist preached repentance, we are informed in Scripture, that "Jerusalem and all Judea, and also all the region round about Jordan, were baptized of him, confessing their sins." Each individual of this vast multitude, made, in words at least, the due confession of his iniquity. How came it to pass that repentance and confession of sin were at this time so general among the Jewish people? The doctrine of repentance, it seems natural to suppose, must at all times be unpopular; for to repent, even in the lowest sense of the word, implies an acknowledgment of having done wrong: and is the bulk of mankind disposed to this admission? Surely men may be

converted to any sentiment more easily than to this. Let us then inquire how it probably came to pass that so great a multitude made profession of repentance.

There is a certain fashion in religion. Men follow the stream. Does an extraordinary preacher appear? How many fly to hear him, and (what is more remarkable) how unanimous are they in his praise! They will hear perhaps the most obnoxious truths from his lips, and will become professors of those doctrines by which they themselves are condemned. For they feel complacency at the thought of agreeing with the preacher, and do but imperfectly consider what he says: they do not at least perceive all the bearing of his doctrines; they do not follow it out into all the practical consequences to which it leads. This unquestionably is a common case in our days; and probably this also was the case at the time of the preaching of the Baptist.

But did John compliment with the name of true penitents the multitude of persons, who came to be baptized by him, and to confess to him their sins? Was he satisfied with having a large audience? Did he judge, that because they heard him gladly, they were therefore pardoned and accepted by God, and were true disciples of the Saviour? Far from it. He sharply rebuked many of these professed penitents; for, "when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? bring forth fruits meet for repentance."

We may deduce from this passage a most important lesson. We may learn from it that baptism is nothing—that confession of sin is nothing—that the profession of repentance is nothing, unless there be added fruits meet for repentance. Though a man should haye eyes which stream all the day with tears; though he should talk much of his baseness and unworthiness; though he should profess the same faith with the sincerest saint; though he should at the same time talk most earnestly of forsaking his sins; nevertheless if he does not in truth and in fact forsake them, he is nothing. It is not the *profession of repentance* which is required of us; but *fruits meet for repentance.*

Ch. Ob.

VERSES FROM THE ARABIC.

(By Ibrahim Ben Adham.)

RELIGION'S gems can ne'er adorn
The flimsy robe by pleasure worn,
Its feeble texture soon would tear,
And give those jewels to the air.
Thrice happy they who seek th' abode
Of peace and pleasure, in their God!
Who spurn the world, its joys despise,
And grasp at bliss beyond the skies.

PETER'S REPENTANCE.

I, ONCE a rock, became a wavering reed,
And though forewarn'd, thrice my dear Lord denied.
He turn'd and look'd—my heart o'erwhelm'd with shame,
In bitterest anguish for his mercy cried.
The bruised reed his mercy would not break,
But hastened to me early from the grave;
And twice he bade me feed his sheep, and prove
That I did love him most who most forgave.

Ed. Miss. Mag.

Review of New Publications.

A TRACT.

Genuine Religion the best Friend of the People; or the influence of the gospel, when known, believed, and experienced, upon the manners and happiness of the people. Intended as a proper present from the rich to the poor, and from ministers to the families under their charge. By ARCHIBALD BONAR, A. M. Charlestown. Howe. 1807. pp. 48.

THE review of *a tract* may be thought a singularity. But when we consider the extensive circulation and influence of this species of publication, and how exceedingly adapted it is to communicate instruction, we judge it of sufficient importance to merit the most respectful notice of reviewers. Many a cumbrous folio might be named, which is far less valuable, and less fitted to do good, than the pamphlet now under review. One of the arguments, by which the present Bishop of London recommends the distribution of tracts, has much weight. "It appears, says he, that this is the very mode made use of by the adversaries of our religion, in order to undermine and destroy it. They consider small tracts of infidelity, as the best and most effectual method of disseminating irreligion among their readers and admirers; and accordingly, have employed their talents in composing, and all their industry in dispersing them over the world. Let us, then, endeavour to foil our enemies at their own weapons, which will surely prove more successful in the hands of truth, than in those of error."

Facts abundantly prove that this is an easy, cheap, and inoffensive way of doing good; that it is more extensive in its use, and more likely to succeed, than almost any other. Accordingly it becomes a matter of great consequence, that tracts be *well written;* that they contain pure evangelical truth, and be plain, striking, comprehensive, and entertaining. It is specially important, that readers should find in tracts the way of salvation through Christ clearly elucidated. In this respect, those in circulation are, generally speaking, partly commendable, and partly defective. They exhibit many things of an evangelical cast. They mention Christ, grace, regeneration, and salvation, as the great things of religion. They are suited to awaken, convince, and guide sinners, to comfort the poor in spirit, and to animate believers in duty. But there commonly appears, in a higher or lower degree, one defect. The peculiar nature of regeneration is not pointed out with sufficient clearness. The characteristics of true religion are not sufficiently distinguished from the characteristics of that false, delusive religion, which leaves the soul destitute of holiness. The difference is not clearly pointed out between true Christian experience, and that experience, which will easily coalesce with unsanctified nature.

A religious tract, which professes to teach the way in which

sinners are freed from the curse of the law, filled with light and comfort, and interested in the great salvation, should, with utmost care, describe the temper, with which sinners believe in Christ. That faith ought to be explained, which is the gift of God, the fruit of sanctifying grace. It should be represented, as essential to the believer's character, that he cordially approves both the precept and penalty of that divine law, which the Saviour loved and honoured; and that he unfeignedly justify the holy administration of God; saying, "thou art just when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest." Without unreserved approbation of the righteousness of God in the moral law, we cannot receive pardon and salvation, as *of grace*.

The peculiar nature of Christian consolation and joy, as well as of faith, ought to be described. The joy, which persons may derive from the belief, that their sins are forgiven and their happiness secure, is not the first and highest joy of the newborn soul. Genuine Christian joy arises from a new and spiritual discovery of the excellent character and government of God, particularly from a clear view and sincere admiration of that most glorious and amiable display of his moral perfections, which is made in redemption by Christ. Such joy may be properly denominated, *joy in the Lord*. On this point the excellent tract before us is not wholly unexceptionable. When speaking of the comfort and holiness which are the effects of regeneration, the author says;

"The Spirit fills them with peace and joy, by bearing witness, that God hath accepted them through his beloved Son; that his anger is turned away; that he hath adopted them into his family, and given them not only the honourable title, but all the inestimable privileges of children.—Thus through views of God, as a reconciled Father, through the prospect of immortal joys, and through noble elevations above this miserable world, they go on their way rejoicing."

To readers in general the joy of the true convert is not in this place clearly distinguished from the joy of the deluded enthusiast, or the self-righteous pharisee. We would not expunge from the list of a Christian's consolations a humble hope, that God's anger is turned away, that he is accepted of God through Christ, adopted into his family, and entitled to eternal glory. But it is demonstrable, that this cannot be his principal consolation, and that his purest, divinest joy always depends on direct apprehensions of God's moral excellence.

In other parts the author of this pamphlet describes the work of the Spirit in a more discriminating manner, and declares, "the wide difference between those self-abasing convictions of the Spirit, which are connected with salvation, and the remonstrances of natural conscience in unrenewed men."

For variety and importance of matter and excellence of style, we remember not to have seen any tract comparable with this. Part I. exhibits the nature of religion, doctrinal, experimental, and practical. This part is divided into three chapters; the first, on the principles of religion; the second, on the experience of religion; the third, on the practical influence of religion.

Part II. shows the importance of religion to the usefulness and happiness of the people. Part III. describes the means best calculated for promoting the knowledge and spirit of religion.

The following extracts afford useful specimens of this tract. While recommending the duty of religious meditation in retirement, the author writes thus;

"The want of religious knowledge, and habitual neglect of serious consideration, proves the ruin of thousands. What real or persevering religion can be expected from an uninformed, undisciplined, unthinking mind? And how unavailing must be all the means of grace, if men will not allow themselves leisure to examine their real state before God, to ponder the things which belong to their salvation, and to meditate on the all-important doctrines, promises, and precepts of Scripture? Some attention is necessary to give the objects of sense their full force; these are ever present, and their influence is powerful; but of what is unseen and everlasting, a more fixed recollection is indispensably necessary: this, in some measure, removes the distance between heaven and earth; brings spiritual objects near to the believing, reflecting mind; increases that faith which is the substance of things hoped for; and derives from these unseen realities, far nobler joy than can be obtained from the most inviting pleasures of sin.

"Retire, therefore, by yourselves, into the fields or the closet, to meditate on heavenly themes; contemplate what hath been, what is, and what shall be hereafter. Mark the ways of Providence; and trace, with admiring acknowledgment, the doing of the Lord to yourselves, your family, and your kindred. Look forward to future, but certain and approaching scenes: an expiring world, a general judgment, an unalterable state. How must these solemn prospects moderate your eagerness for the passing fashions of the world, and quicken your progress towards Zion. Meditate on heaven, as the land of rest, and the sure inheritance of all the redeemed; contemplate their joys and their employments, and long to be united with the just made perfect, and with the innumerable company of angels. Above all, let the meditations on God the Redeemer be sweet unto your thoughts. Contemplate your heavenly Father's mercy and faithfulness, his infinite glory, and his condescending care. Look unto Jesus, the author of eternal redemption: admire his transcendent excellence, his sufferings and triumphs, the blessings he hath purchased, the mediation, he now accomplishes, and the happiness prepared for all his followers."

The following observations, found in the concluding address to parents, are very impressive.

"Too many parents, in the inferior stations of life, foolishly suppose, that if they can procure food and raiment for their children, they have sufficiently discharged their duty, and that their early days are far more usefully employed in earning a little pittance, than in learning to read the Scriptures.

"Cruel parents! is it thus you care for the souls of your offspring? Is it thus you prepare them for acting an honourable part in life? And is it thus you fortify them against the dangerous temptations of an ensnaring world? How false have you proved to your trust! and how regardless of the divine requirements! Your children are uneducated; and are likely to remain unprincipled through life: they will soon be beyond the reach of your instruction, under the dominion of others, and engaged in the service of their masters; may it not be feared, that there they will act a wretched part, until their intemperance, dishonesty, and fraud, are detected, and they themselves loaded with infamy and disgrace? To you, their parents, will be greatly owing their vices, and their miseries. You taught them not, in early days, to dread the path of the destroyer: you implanted not in their early minds the seeds of religious knowledge; nay, you cruelly unfitted them for acquiring that knowledge, by withholding from them the blessing of education."

The careful and devout attention of parents to the follow-

ing directions would greatly assist them in the religious education of their children.

"For fulfilling this duty, by a method easy to yourselves, and advantageous to your family, let me recommend to your attention the venerable Assembly's Catechism. It contains a valuable and comprehensive summary of the Protestant religion: in it the sublime doctrines of Christianity, its glorious privileges, and its pure precepts, are stated with accuracy, arranged in order, and expressed in language as plain as the subject will admit. Cause your children and servants to learn this catechism; explain its meaning; and allot proper seasons for examining their progress in the knowledge of Christian principles.

"No season can be more suitable for this profitable employment, and none can be more convenient, than the evening of the Lord's day: you are not then fatigued with labour, nor encumbered by the interruptions of worldly business. That sacred day is appropriated for the purposes of obtaining and imparting heavenly knowledge; its precious hours must not be squandered in the circle of friends, nor in business, nor in recreations: these are allowed in six succeeding days of each revolving week: one day of seven is the day of God; he claims it for his own; he separates it for himself; and wills not that its hallowed joys should be molested or abridged. He commands his people to keep it holy, as a day of peculiar intercourse with heaven; and to seek their delight in those spiritual duties which become the followers of a risen Saviour. Every man, therefore, who bears the Christian name, ought to venerate the Sabbath. But heads of families, in busy or inferior stations, may particularly prize this day of sacred rest; and ought carefully to guard against the misimprovement of its valuable hours. The duties of the closet must neither be omitted nor superficially performed: the duties of the sanctuary, if attended with reverence, will yield sublimest satisfaction: yet let not these exclude the delightful exercises of family instruction and devotion; if these are omitted; if you only are well employed; if the members of your family are not attended to, they will increase, by their bad example, that general profanation of the Sabbath which you so justly lament. Suffer, therefore, the word of exhortation. On every returning evening of that hallowed day, convene your children, domestics, and servants; recommend religion to their attention and esteem; inquire into their conduct, and devotions, during the former part of the day; remind them of what they heard in the house of God; examine if they have committed to memory what you formerly appointed; commend the diligent; encourage to farther improvement; and close this profitable duty with suitable counsels, and with the delightful solemnities of family worship.

Religious Intelligence.

INTELLIGENCE RESPECTING THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

(Continued from p. 483.)

Extract of a Letter from a Roman Catholic Clergyman in Swabia.

"I FEEL the highest regard for the wise and prudent zeal of the English Bible Committee, because it is my own desire to see the pure and genuine word of God spread, and am so entirely against all corruption of this invaluable treasure, that I myself would prevent it by all means in my power. As the degeneracy of all outward churches is so great and general, and still threatens to become greater and more general, I comfort myself with this, that the Lord is retiring into the inner temple, and more gloriously building up the invisible church. At least he does not sit idle at the right hand of his Father, nor can he lose his suit: whatever may now be the appearance, he must finally be the gainer. Our duty however is this, to pray more earnestly than ever: let thy kingdom come!

and, Lord abide with us, for it is towards evening. Dr. Sailer, (who by his truly evangelical instructions and writings has proved a great blessing to the Roman Catholics in Germany) thus expresses himself in his last book: 'Christianity is so firmly founded on its own basis, that after it has outlived the times of persecution, after it has remained unshaken in the age of superstition, it will also outlive this age of infidelity and contempt.' Therefore we cannot sufficiently rejoice, that we are privileged to serve such a Master, who is infinitely superior to all his enemies, who has the victory in his hands, ever since the world has stood, who finally shall put all enemies under his feet, at whose name every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord. Nor shall we be able sufficiently to know and to appreciate all the excellencies of the kingdom of Christ, and the exalted dignity of his person: never shall we be able fully to comprehend the favour and happiness vouchsafed to them who shall be partakers of the kingdom of God through faith in Christ. Would not even our blessed Lord and Saviour himself rejoice to see the fraternal union which subsists between us, the interest which we mutually take in each other, and the sincerity of our wish to see all our brethren become partakers of the same blessings? Yes, Lord! let thy kingdom come, and be extended further and further. May our blessed Lord and Saviour daily more become that which he is made of God unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption; yea may he become our all in all, and we fruitful branches in him the living vine. May light and life and love be multiplied in us, and may the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in the love of God and his dear Son Jesus Christ."

Extract from an Advertisement of the Roman Catholic Bible Society at Ratisbon, to the Christians of that Persuasion throughout Germany.

"*To those who value the Doctrine of Jesus.*

"Dear Brethren and Sisters in Christ!

"It is desirable, that the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament could be put into the hands of many pious Christians at a low price. Thereby they would be comforted in their afflictions, strengthened in their trials, and more preserved from the temptations of the world. Many excellent souls do not find in the public religious instruction that for which they hunger; are also often in the confessional only judged for their outward deeds, without being led to an acknowledgment of their inward corruption, and to faith in the blood of Jesus their Redeemer: if these could read the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament in the quiet time of holidays, their faith in the simple doctrines from the mouth of Jesus Christ would, by the mercy of their Saviour, be thereby enlivened; and the Lord's gifts in the Holy Spirit be quickened in them. They would hear the voice of the Father in their inward part, which leads them to their Saviour, of which Christ saith: 'They shall be all taught of God; and whosoever hath learned of the Father, and receiveth it, cometh unto me.'

"From these considerations has arisen, in the minds of some clergymen, a wish to set on foot a cheap German edition of the New Testament, for the use of many pious Christians, the Repository thereof to be at Ratisbon, in the Ecclesiastical Seminary, as a central place in Germany.

"I hereby give this intelligence to some known confessors of Christ, with a request that they will consider the matter before the Lord, recommend it to him in prayer; and if he is pleased to afford them any opportunity to contribute in any way toward it, that they will not neglect it. Christian poverty and love have accomplished greater things in the world than the power and riches of the world could do.

"O Lord! Redeemer of our souls! Shepherd of the small despised flock! do with this work as may please thee. Thy kingdom proceeds an incessant pace in a still small way, and those who oppose it can do nothing against it, but become thy footstool, and contribute to the rest of thy feet in the peace of thy people. If it please thee, let thy holy history, the history of thy childhood, of thy ministry, of thy suffering, and of the victory of the Holy Spirit in the apostles and firstlings of

the Christian Church, come into the hands of thy little ones for their comfort and confirmation."

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Extract of a Letter from a respectable Lutheran Minister in Esthonia.

"As you made some inquiries respecting the state of the Bible in the Russian Empire, permit me now to return you the following answer:—

"Among the poorer classes of our countrymen the Holy Scriptures are so scarce, that perhaps out of 100 families hardly five will be found in possession of a Bible or New Testament.

"The scarcer Bibles are, the more diligently they are read by the people when they can obtain them.

"Throughout the whole province of Esthonia there is a great want of Bibles, chiefly among the Swedish and Esthonian peasants.

"There is in general neither a public nor private institution for the express purpose of relieving this want by a gratuitous or cheap distribution of Bibles, except a few small legacies, which have been left to some churches for supplying the schools with Bibles.

"Many, who are destitute of the Bible, express a great desire after this treasure, which desire is increased, when they find it in the possession of others.

"I have not a moment's doubt, that here a Society of respectable Clergymen and other pious Christians might be formed for the express purpose of spreading the Bible more generally.

"I feel the less hesitation in saying that such a Society might be established, because among the 50 or 60 clergymen in this country, as also among the private gentlemen in Lapponia, several are known to me as men who feel the most lively interest in enlightening the mind, and meliorating the state and condition of their fellow-creatures, by faith in Christ.

"Permit me now, reverend and dear Sir, to accompany this information with a humble petition to the British and Foreign Bible Society kindly to remember the 50 country parishes in Esthonia, which contain at least 15,000 families, and to assist them with a pecuniary aid, in order that the whole Bible, or at least a part of it, may be gratuitously or cheaply distributed to the many indigent persons who are at present destitute of this treasure.

"In the mean while I shall endeavour to form a Bible Society in our parts; and should it please the British and Foreign Bible Society to lend us their generous aid in procuring a fund for such an institution, I have not a moment's doubt, that many gentlemen in our parts would thereby be excited to take an active part in such a benevolent design."

— *Ch. Ob.*

INDIA.

Extract of a Letter from J. Marshman to the Rev. Dr. Green, Philadelphia, dated Serampore, November 4th, 1806.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

You will be pleased to hear that the Lord has not forsaken us; but still continues to own our humble and weak efforts to promote his cause in this land. Within about twenty months past we have baptized nearly fifty of those who once bowed down to dumb idols, the greater part of whom, by their walk and conversation, afford us a degree of pleasure peculiar, perhaps, to persons in our circumstances.

We have, also, the happiness of seeing not a few of them our helpers in the work of the Lord. Had you been present this evening you would have felt pleasure of no common kind, while joining with us in giving the parting benediction to *six native brethren*, going out to carry the news of life to their perishing fellow countrymen.

It will be acceptable to the friends of God and man, with you, to hear that their generous exertions to forward the translations of the Sacred Scriptures into the Indian languages, are not in vain. The Lord is greatly enlarging us in this work, and that in such a manner as leaves no doubt whether it be his hand or not. The New Testament, in *five* languages, is now in the press; the Bengalee, the Hindoosthanee, the Mahratta, the Orissa, and the Sangskrit languages; and translations in *five others* are going forward successfully. Among these the goodness of God respecting

the Chinese, demands particular acknowledgments (when we consider the number of souls interested) in giving us so able and judicious a translator in the person of Mr. Lossar, and in enabling some of the younger branches of the family to make so rapid a progress in the Chinese language and characters, as well as in the originals of the Scriptures, that the most pleasing prospect is afforded of the sacred oracles' being one day, not only wholly translated into that extraordinary language, but of this translation being so fully revised, and compared with other writings, in the language, as shall remove every doubt of its fidelity and accuracy. With the most cordial regards to our honoured Christian brethren with you, I remain, reverend and dear Sir, very sincerely yours.

As. Mag.

List of New Publications.

The Fifth Volume of the Life of George Washington, commander in chief of the American forces during the war which established the independence of his country, and first president of the United States. By John Marshall. 8vo. with maps, &c. Philadelphia, Wayne.

The peaceful Reflections and glorious Prospects of the departing Saint. A discourse delivered in the meeting-house of the First Baptist Church in Boston, March 10th 1807, at the interment of the Rev. Samuel Stillman, D. D. late pastor of said Church. By Thomas Baldwin, D. D. pastor of the Second Baptist Church in Boston. pp. 31. Boston, Manning & Loring.

A Lettter on the subject of Episcopacy, from Samuel Osgood, Esq. to a young gentleman of New York. 31 cents. New York, Collins & Perkins.

An account of the Life and Writings of James Beattie, LL. D. late Professor of Moral Philosophy and Logick in the Marischal College and University of Aberdeen, including many of his original letters. By Sir William Forbes, of Pitsligo, Bart. one of the executors of Dr. Beattie. 8vo. pp. 559. $2,50 in boards. New York, Brisban & Brannan. March, 1807.

Vol. I. of Lectures on the Elements of Chemistry, delivered in the University of Edinburgh; by the late Joseph Black, M. D. Professor of Chemistry in that University, physician to his Majesty for Scotland, Member of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, and the Imperial Academy of Sciences at St. Petersburgh. Published from his manuscripts by John Robinson, LL. D. Professor of Natural Philosophy in the university of Edinburgh. First American, from the last London edition. 8vo. pp. 394. Philadelphia, Matthew Carey.

Vol. III. Part II. of The New Cyclopedia, or Dictionary of Arts and Sciences. By Abraham Rees, D.D. F.R.S. editor of the last edition of Mr. Chambers' Dictionary, with the assistance of eminent professional gentlemen. First American edition, revised, corrected, enlarged, and adapted to this country, by several literary and scientific characters. 4to. Price $3,50 for the half volume. After the publication of the 5th volume the price will be $5. Philadelphia, S. F. Bradford. Lemuel Blake, No. 1, Cornhill, agent in Boston.

Vol. II. of The Works of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke. Boston, J. West, and Oliver Cromwell Greenleaf. Carlisle, printer. 8vo.

Memoirs of the Life of Marmontel, written by himself. 2 vols. 12mo. $2 bound. New-York, Brisban & Brannan. February, 1807.

An Abridgement of the History of New-England, for the use of young persons. Now introduced into the principal schools in this town. By Hannah Adams. Second edition. Boston. Etheridge & Bliss. 12mo. pp. 188.

The Wanderer of Switzerland, and other poems, by James Montgomery. 1 vol. 18mo. pp. 177. 75 cents, extra boards. Boston: Greenough, Stebbins, & Hunt, and James F. Fletcher.

A Poem on the restoration of learning in the East; which obtained Mr. Buchanan's prize. By Charles Grant, Esq. M. A. fellow of Magdalen college. 8vo. Salem. Cushing & Appleton.

The Village Sermons, by George Burder, in three volumes, containing 65 sermons. Price $2,25. Boston. E. Lincoln.

Letters to a young Lady, in which the duties and character of women are considered, chiefly with a reference to prevailing opinions. By Mrs. West, author of Letters to a Young Man. 1 vol. 8vo. $2,50 bound. Albany, Parker & Bliss.

The Miseries of Human Life; or, the Groans of Samuel Sensitive and Timothy Testy; with a few supplementary sighs from Mrs. Testy. In twelve dialogues. First American, from the 3d London edition. 12mo. pp. 220. Boston, Greenough, Stebbins & Hunt, & Belcher & Armstrong.

Essays in a Series of Letters to a Friend, on the following subjects: 1. On a man's writing memoirs of himself. 2. On decision of character. 3. On the application of the epithet romantic. 4. On some of the causes, by which evangelical religion has been rendered less acceptable to persons of cultivated taste. By John Foster. Two vols. in one. 12mo. Hartford. Lincoln and Gleason.

The Columbian Orator, containing a variety of original and selected Pieces; together with Rules, calculated to improve youth and others in the ornamental and useful art of eloquence. By Caleb Bingham, A. M. author of the American Preceptor, Young Lady's Accidence, &c. 7th edition. 12mo. Boston, Manning & Loring, for the Author. Feb. 1807.

The Wonders of Creation, natural and artificial, containing an account of the most remarkable mountains, rivers, lakes, caves, cataracts, mineral springs, Indian mounds, and antiquities in the world. In 2 vols. 12mo. Boston, John M. Dunham.

Robert Frazier's Journal from St. Louis in Louisiana, to the Pacific Ocean, in one vol. 8vo.

An Introductory Address: a sermon; a charge and right hand of fellowship; delivered October 8, 1806, at the Ordination of Rev. David T. Kimball, over the first church and congregation in Ipswich. Newburyport: M. Blunt. 1806.

Thomas Dobson, of Philadelphia, proposes to publish an elegant edition of the New Testament, with those very full marginal references, known by the name of Canne's Notes. To be printed on a superfine royal paper, with an elegant new type; and will be comprised in one large quarto vol. of about 700 pages; price to subscribers $5. If this undertaking meet with suitable encouragement, proposals will be issued for printing the Old Testament in the same manner.

William Andrews of this town, Proposes to publish, by subscription, the works of William Paley, D. D. arch-deacon of Carlisle; with a Portrait of the author. Containing I. The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy. II. a view of the evidences of Christianity. III. Natural Theology, or the Evidences of the existence and attributes of the Deity, collected from the appearances of nature. IV. A Charge delivered to the clergy of the Diocese of Carlisle. V. A Sermon preached before the University of Cambridge. VI. A Sermon preached at the Assizes at Durham. VII. Three Sermons on various occasions. VIII. Reasons for Contentment. IX. Young Christian instructed. X. Horæ Paulinæ; or the truth of the Scripture History of St. Paul evinced by a comparison of the Epistles, which bear his name, with the Acts of the Apostles, and with one another. XI. The Clergyman's Companion.—This work will be printed in 4 octavo volumes, of 500 pages each, on a superfine wove paper, and new type. The price to subscribers will be $2 per vol. in boards; $2,25 bound.

J. M. Dunham, of Boston, proposes to publish Sermons by Hugh Blair, D.D F.R.S. late professor of rhetorick and belles lettres in the university of Edinburgh. In three volumes complete from the 25th London edition of 5 vols. To which will be prefixed the life of that venerable author. Price $6 neatly bound and lettered.

Obituary.

MEMOIRS OF REV. DR. JAMES COGSWELL.

[*Extracted from Rev. Dr. Strong's funeral sermon.*]

Dr. Cogswell died at Hartford, (Con.) January 2d, 1807. He was the son of Mr. Samuel and Mrs. Ann Cogswell, born in the town of Saybrook, January 6th, 1720. In his childhood his parents removed to the town of Lebanon, where they remained to their old age, when he took

them to his own house, and most tenderly supplied all their wants, until he was called by the providence of God to commit them to the dust.—This son was early distinguished by a love of science, and a conviction of the truth and importance of the Christian doctrines, which was the occasion of his being selected by his acquaintance as a proper subject for a learned education.

He was admitted a student in Yale College, in the year 1738, and was graduated in the year 1742. Soon after this he became a preacher of the gospel, and was ordained pastor of the first Church of Christ in Canterbury in the year 1744.

In the year 1771, he was dismissed from this pastoral charge, and early in the following year installed pastor of the church in Scotland, a parish in the town of Windham, where he continued until December, 1804. While in this place he received the degree of Doctor of Divinity, from Yale College. Being rendered incapable of public ministerial service, through the natural infirmities of age, it became necessary for his comfortable support, to remove him to the family of his son, Doctor Mason Fitch Cogswell, of this place. This was a comfortable retreat to the venerable parent, and here the Lord hath repaid to him in kind, his filial piety to his own parents in their old age; here he hath been nourished with the most tender affection, which may God reward, until his decease, January 2d, 1807, and had he survived until this day, which is the anniversary of his birth, he would have completed 87 years.

This servant of the Lord hath been a man of affliction, having buried three wives and four children, one child only surviving; and through all these scenes of sorrow, had grace given him, to honour the divine sovereignty, and his own Christian and ministerial profession. He was an example to the church of Christ in tribulation as well as in joy.

While a member of college he was distinguished for sobriety, application, and especially for classical science, which he preserved through his whole life.

While he was in his collegiate life, there was a great revival of religion in the land, in which the college shared, whereby many were disposed to undertake the work of the ministry, who have since been burning and shining lights in our churches.

At this time, what was with him before a general conviction, of the truth and importance of Christianity, was changed into an experimental acquaintance with its power and comforts; which confirmed him in the purpose of devoting his life to the service of his Redeemer, in the ministry of the gospel. His natural temter was social and cheerful; he had a great command of his passions; his intellect was quick and clear; his imagination was lively and pleasant, yet chastened with the sobriety and seriousness of a Christian, and accompanied with the dignity becoming a minister of the gospel.

His natural disposition, together with his religious acquirements, rendered him a pleasing companion to all who reverence virtue; a beloved child of his parents; a kind husband, and a parent, whom his children could not fail to love and reverence.

He was a firm believer of the evangelical doctrines of the gospel, and as on these he built his own hope of a blessed immortality, so he inculcated on others the necessity of both believing and obeying them, that they might inherit eternal life. The faith on which he relied as divine and saving, was one that is accompanied by fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, and productive of good works.

His preaching was, generally, plain and practical, addressed to the understanding and consciences of his hearers. The natural and Christian benevolence, which shone in his countenance, were admirably adapted to enforce the doctrines of divine love, and impress the minds of his hearers with the words of our Lord, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

His private diary, which he kept for many years, gives abundant evidence, that in prosperity he was grateful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, especially for the gift of an all-sufficient Redeemer, and the

grace of God which he purchased on the cross; that in affliction he was still before the Lord, adoring the corrections of a Father's hand; that he was anxious to fill up his life with usefulness; and that in his extreme old age, he was enabled to adopt the words of the apostle, "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Several valuable communications are on hand, and shall be seasonably introduced.—A Biographical Sketch, promised this month, is unavoidably deferred for a future Number.

ADDRESS OF THE EDITORS.

At the close of the second volume of the Panoplist, the Editors beg leave respectfully to address the Christian community. Nothing but a full persuasion of the increasing importance of this publication, and a humble, though animating hope of its increasing utility, could induce them again to solicit public patronage. Although there is no reason to doubt the promptitude of a large number to continue the encouragement they have already given the Panoplist, and no occasion, perhaps, for particular arguments to persuade others to co-operate with them, still it appears a service which the Editors owe to the community and to themselves, to unfold the considerations which elevate their hopes, and stimulate them to unremitting exertions.

The Editors derive their most powerful motive from *the importance of the Christian cause*. That cause involves the interests of truth and virtue, and all the spiritual concerns of mankind, besides having an inseparable connexion with their temporal enjoyments. That cause the word of God requires all men to defend and propagate. The Editors feel the obligation. And as divine Providence has, through the medium of the Panoplist, given them access to the public; they resolve, though at the expense of much time, labour, and personal convenience, to use that advantage for the Redeemer's glory, and the prosperity of his church. It was and is their fixed resolution to *contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints*. That the public might entertain no doubts concerning their views of that faith, they have explicitly avowed their firm adherence to what have been called *the doctrines of the Reformation*, or *the doctrines of grace*. These doctrines, which constituted the religious faith of our venerable forefathers, the Editors embrace, as the truths of God, and will endeavour to use *the whole Christian armour* in their defence. In this undertaking they hope for the countenance of Christians. If publications intended merely to refine literary taste, to gratify curiosity, and to entertain a vacant hour, obtain support from men of the world; may not a publication, which aims to advance undefiled religion, and to qualify men for celestial enjoyment, expect the patronage of those, who seriously feel the importance of Christianity?

The Editors derive another motive from *the alarming events, which are taking place, both in Europe and America*. The enemies of our holy religion wish us to believe, that there is no danger. They cry, peace and safety, while they are coming in like a flood upon us, intending, from our security, to obtain the greater advantage against us. Are our apprehensions of danger groundless? What shall be said of that licentious spirit, which hates the purity, and casts off the restraints of the gospel, or of that proud philosophy, which will not bow to its mysteries? What shall be said of that bold, enterprizing spirit of impiety, which openly renounces moral and religious obligation, prostrates every venerable and sacred institution, and gives unbridled liberty to depraved passion? What shall be said of that boasted liberality, which denies the plain, obvious sense of Scripture, and instead of the divine

excellencies of revelation, substitutes the cold maxims of unsanctified heathen morality? How numerous and how multiform are the errors of the day! How many labour by preaching and writing, by conversation and example, to reduce Christianity to the standard of proud reason and corrupt inclination! How many nominal Christians embrace a religion, which is destitute of gospel sanctity, and aims to combine the service of God and of Mammon! How extensive, and almost universal is the influence of antichristian error and licentiousness! In consequence of this, how many corruptions and disorders are found in our churches, and how dreadfully has the infection of irreligion spread among all ranks of people. These are not creatures of imagination. They are realities, seen clearly, and with the greatest solicitude by all enlightened Christians. The constant progress of these evils has, for many years, been attentively observed. Is it not time to be alarmed? Do not the appearances of the present day plainly indicate, that it is the duty of ministers, and all believers to make extraordinary efforts?

The Panoplist rises to counteract prevailing evils, and to prevent their increase; to stem the torrent of vice; to point out the disorders and dangers of the times; and earnestly to call men to withdraw their affections from the uncertain, changing interests of this world, and set them on that kingdom, which can never be moved. Its aim is, to detect the corruptions of modern literature, to unfold the subtleties and absurdities of what is called *rational Christianity*, to strip learned pride and impiety of every fair disguise, and to promote the theoretic knowledge and practical influence of sound divinity.

The Editors consider, as another animating motive to persevering exertion, *the useful effects which the Panoplist has already produced, and the extensive approbation of devout and learned men which it has received.* Information from numerous correspondents warrants the belief, that the publication has, by the blessing of God, actually conduced to the great ends which have been sought. Churches and ministers have, in many instances, been more deeply impressed, than ever before, with the dangers of the times, and excited to the important duty of *strengthening the things which remain, which are ready to die.* The constantly increasing circulation of the Panoplist affords proof of its general acceptance. And the Editors cannot but be animated by the explicit, decided approbation of their most respectable correspondents in England and Scotland, as well as in America, and by the advice and solicitation of some, who are not only pillars of the church, but the boast of science, and ornaments to their country, that the Panoplist may be continued.

Two years ago, it was the full conviction of the Editors, that the circumstances of the times loudly called for such a publication. Nothing but that conviction could have induced them, in the midst of their other employments, to undertake such a laborious and arduous work. And nothing but a conviction that the same providential call is continued, could persuade them to proceed. To drop the publication in these circumstances would doubtless be pleasing to the enemies of truth; but it would be as painful to its friends. In short, all the considerations which influenced the Editors at the beginning, and many new ones, arising from the progress and success of the work, from the promised aid of numerous correspondents, and from various other advantages they have secured, combine to warm their zeal, and prompt them to perseverance.

The Editors are not insensible of the delicacy, arduousness, and responsibility of their undertaking. But believing that the cause, in which they are engaged, is the cause of truth, and humbly depending on the assistance and blessing of God, they are unappalled by the greatest difficulties.

Let the friends of the gospel remember that, by subscribing for the Panoplist, they have opportunity not only to entertain and profit themselves and their particular connexions, but to encourage a work, which is designed extensively to promote the glorious end, for which the Saviour lived, and suffered, and died.

END OF VOL. II.